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WINTER IN BATH.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

A

WINTER IN BATH.

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VOL. I.

BY THE AUTHOR OF TWO POPULAR NOVELS.

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WINTER IN BATH.

CHAP. I.

We are told, that the sins of the parent will be visited on the children: we think this a hard sentence, and yet we every day with our own eyes see it fulfilled; we every day see the virtuous

and prudent daughter shunned by young women of her own age, and her own situation in life (with whom it would be her wish to associate, and to live in habits of friendly intercourse), because she is under the same roof with a mother, whose volatile manners, and culpable conduct, had lowered her character in the early part of her life, and had ever since kept her at a proscribed distance from those who had never violated the rules of propriety, and the laws of virtue! Years have probably elapsed since that period, and in deep and retired repentance, the unhappy parent has bewailed her errors; to her Maker she has confessed them, and he, merciful and compassionate, may have blotted them out: but the inexorable world still looks on her with an eye of severity, and though

not a single fellow-creature, feeling herself perfectly free from guilt, dares cast the first stone, yet the laws of custom prevent the most compassionate amongst them from receiving to her friendship, or to her confidence, the frail sister!—Such are the laws of the world—and such *should they be;* for these operate on minds which are unaffected by religion, and contribute to keep the decencies of life from being violated; these draw the line between the openly vicious, and the uprightly virtuous character: and though on each side the shades may respectively fade and lessen, still the line of separation is apparent; and if we sometimes grieve while we draw that line, and lament the hardships of it in this or that particular case, yet the interests of religion, and of social order, demand the

sacrifice of sensibility and compassion on our parts, and on the part of the sufferer patient endurance.—But her daughter her darling! who shall teach a mother to see her child neglected or overlooked? who shall teach her to bear the two-fold stab, which pierces her bosom through her offspring? If such be the severe consequences entailed on maternal culpability, how cautious should every mother be, of even the appearance of criminality! how should she guard herself against the attacks of the prophane and the profligate, by decency of dress, modesty of demeanour, steadiness of conduct, and simplicity of manners, always bearing about her the truth of this sublime passage--"Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be raised!"

At seventeen the sanguine mind of youth beholds a gay perspective; hence the clouds unseen are gathering at a distance, frequently bewilder, and almost overwhelm as they approach, the inexperienced enthusiast.

Elated by hope, and with a heart beating high with expectation, Adriana Hartley found the chaise stop at the door of her father's elegant mansion in Grosvenor-square. Four years had elapsed since she had seen either of her parents; she had been placed at a school in the north of England, where, satisfied with hearing from time to time of her health, Mr. and Mrs. Hartley left her, and pursued their gay routine in London and the country, without taking "an expensive journey to visit a child, to whom

they could do no manner of good, and from the visiting of whom, from her being placed quite out of the vicinity of their friends and acquaintances, there was no way of combining *pleasure* with such a tour." The death of Mrs. Villers, the worthy governess of the academy, obliged this easy couple to think of a new situation for Adriana; and as they were obliged to remove her speedily from the house which had contained her for the last nine years, they directed her to be conducted to London, by a trusty servant, resolving to keep her for a few days, till they had settled were to fix her.

The heart of Adriana was rightly moulded, and Mrs Villers had faithfully performed the task which had been so

entirely confided to her. The first real sorrow which her pupil had felt, was the death of her beloved governess; yet did she not yield to the impressions of grief: Mrs. Villers was relieved from a long period of suffering, and she had cheerfully resigned her breath to him who had bestowed it, with the firm faith and hope of a Christian! Adriana had received the last pressure of affection from that hand, which opened to close no more! but she chased off the warm tears of sorrow from her cheek, when she recollected that Mrs. Villers had told her, it was selfish to indulge grief for those who were removed to a state of happiness.

Filial affection reigned triumphant in her bosom, at receiving the summons to come home, to come to her father—and

her mother! She recollected the sweet smiles which had always played on the lovely countenance of that mother, when she had seen her even but for a few minutes; every feature was still plainly depicted to her "mind's eye," as if seen but yesterday. The manly form of her father, too, was distinctly remembered; and that which had been the first wish of her heart, from the dawn of reason, to these her riper years, was now about to be realized—she was to live with her parents!

It was ten at night when she entered the mansion of her father: her head grew giddy, from the sudden cessation of that rapid motion which she had experienced for the last three days; her heart panted, and her knees trembled at the thoughts

of beholding, and being embraced by, her dear parents.—She was ushered up stairs by a footman, into a small but elegant boudoir, where a good fire and silence were all that awaited her. A faint sickness crept round her heart, she staggered to a sopha, and was seating herself, when a loud scream saluted her ears, and a monkey springing on her, violently seized her arm between his teeth. Adriana shrieked in her turn; the door burst open, a fine showy personage entered, and catching up the marmoset, cried—"Oh! Heavens bless ye, Miss, I hope you a'nt hurt! Come away, you vile little wretch! come, Mr. Pug—come, sir, come with me! I hope, Miss, that the *mischeevous* little *hanimal* hasn't scratch'd off the skin from your poor *harm*: 'tis quite Mrs. Hartley's pet, I assure ye, and when

she's away, won't let any body come into the *bureau* with *impurity*."—" I was more frightened than hurt," said Adriana; " though I believe I should not have been so easily alarmed, but my journey has fatigued me:—and pray are my papa and mamma apprised of my arrival?" asked she faulteringly.—" Oh! yes, Miss! they won't be *surprised*, they both knew as you were *suspected* to *harrive* to night; but they desired you would take every refreshment, and make yourself quite comfortable.—Mrs. Hartley is gone to Mrs. Curzons's party, and then to Lady Honoria Elmer's, and after to a ball and supper at my Lady *What is its*."—" And my papa is gone with her of course?"—" Oh! dear, no, Miss! he's gone to Brookes's I suppose, or——but," stroking the little marmoset, which she still held

on her arm, "what will you take Miss Hartley after your journey? Any thing that you will mention, I will *instantaneously* order the housekeeper to get, and one of the footmen shall bring it up. Suppose now you were to take a little *hamlet*, Miss, or some *verysilly soop*, or some macaronis and cheese, or, for my part, (lie still little Pug!) I know nothing as I prefer to a glass of *knowyou*, with a few *ratified* cakes, after a journey?" If Mrs. Davers had been correct in her list, Adriana being wholly u.. :cquainted with these viands, would have refused them; but she had no inclination to eat, and scarcely heard the voluble and officious attendant. She felt the pain of "hope deferred," when she found that she was not yet to see her parents, and her voice was

impeded by her rising emotions as she tried to speak.—"They will not be at home yet then?" she said.—"Oh! bless ye! no, Miss; but they desired you would make yourself quite comfortable after your journey, and do just as you liked: so perhaps, Miss, you would like to go to bed?"—"If you please," replied Adriana. "Why, after a long journey and fatigue, bed, I must say, is the very best place.—I believe your room is quite ready, Miss,—shall I shew you to it?" Adriana gave her assent by rising from her seat; and when her officious attendant had closed the door on her for the night, she laid her throbbing head on the pillow, and burst into a violent flood of tears. She knew not the cause of her emotion; a combination of feelings, operating with

fatigue, united to produce it; and disappointment, perhaps, had its full share, though she did not place it to that account.

CHAP. II.

It was nine o'clock when Adriana ventured to peep out of her apartment: all was silent—every door in the passage was closed,—not a sound was heard. She walked on a few paces, when she saw a door gently and cautiously opened: it led to another flight of stairs; and with shoes in hand, and evident symptoms of being just escaped from the arms of Morpheus, the housemaid made her appearance. She started at seeing Adri-

ana, who gently enquired if Mr. and Mrs. Hartley were stirring. "Oh! no, Mem!" said the servant whispering and pointing towards a door, "Oh! law, no! there is my mistress safe enough for these four hours, I warrant; and my master, he won't be down much before, I suppose: that's his room, down the gallery." Adriana turned from her informer, and re-entered her chamber. She sat down on her bed: she was, indeed, launched on a new world, for every thing was new to her: she was perfectly ignorant of its customs and its manners; to her it seemed singular to find that her parents were divided, though living under the same roof; to her it also appeared singular, that that roof had for many hours sheltered their only child,

whom they had not seen for a long period, without their making one effort to bring her to their presence. "If such be the world," said she, "the knowledge of it is not to be coveted!" But Adriana sighed as this remark crossed her mind, for did it not contain an implied accusation of her parents? and "to honour her father and mother," had been early impressed on her young mind by Mrs. Villers. Yet, warm in her affections, and sanguine in her hopes, the chill of disappointment had already pierced her heart; and the anxious wish of being received to the bosom of her mother, and being held in the arms of her father, was insensibly fading away, and an apprehension arising of something in the approaching interview, as

new and as unexpected as all that she had seen since she entered the house.

At half past ten, breakfast was served to Adriana in a parlour, and she was interrupted an hour after from pensive reflection, by a summons to Mrs. Hartley's dressing-room. Her knees smote each other as she followed the servant, but she tried to arm herself with courage. "Miss Hartley, Sir," said the man, as he opened the door.—"Let her come in," answered a voice from behind a folding screen, which she recognised for her father's. "How are you, Adriana?" said Mr. Hartley; but as she came within his view, the feelings of a father seemed to give way to the acquired politeness and complaisance of the well-bred man of the world. At see-

ing an elegant female, he rose from his seat, laid down the newspaper he had been studying, and bowed to his daughter; while that daughter, overcome by emotion, sunk on her knees before him! "Rise, Adriana!" said Mr. Hartley, gently taking her up, and imprinting a kiss on her forehead: "I declare I had almost forgotten you.—Why you are absolutely grown out of knowledge!" as he looked on her with strong marks of admiration. "You have not seen Mrs. Hartley of course—she will be as much surprised as myself; you will make us quite old, child!" said he laughing. "You are a good girl, I dare say; I have heard great accounts of you from Mrs. Villers."—"She was kind, Sir, to speak favourably of me," said Adriana; "I hope I shall do nothing to forfeit

her good report."—" I dare say not, I dare say not," said Mr. Hartley, examining her countenance with great attention. " And you sing, I understand," said he, " and play of course?" " A little," said Adriana.—" A little will not do, child, in these days,—it must be all or nothing: there is no doing any thing by halves in the nineteenth century. You draw too?"—" I was going again to say a little," said Adriana, smiling, " but when you do me the favour to look over my porte-feuille, you shall judge whether I do it by halves."—" O yes, I shall look it over one day or other! But a whim has just entered my head: give me your hand, child; I will intrude into Mrs. Hartley's boudoir, merely to see if she will recognise her great girl." " But may not the surprise, Sir—?"asked

Adriana hesitatingly.—"O never mind, we will go;" and he led to the room where our heroine had been ushered the preceding night. He made signs to Adriana to keep silence, as he opened the door without knocking.

Mrs. Hartley, in a wrapping gown, reclined on an *ottoman* by the fire; her breakfast was placed before her, but it seemed unnoticed; she rested her head on her arm, while, as if unconscious of the action, she was waving her foot to and fro, for the entertainment of her frisky favourite, the marmoset, which, like a playful kitten, was seizing it as moved towards him, and then resigned his hold, only to catch it again.

Softly Mr. Hartley led Adriana to her

mother. She heard, she saw them not, till she was thus addressed: "Mrs. Hartley, this lady wishes to be introduced to you, and I have taken on myself that office."—"Good Heavens! Mr Hartley, how you fright me!" said his lady, starting from her chair, glancing a side look at Adriana, making a gentle bend of her body, and then quickly averting her countenance. "My dishabille—my—indeed, Hartley, I could have wished that you had given me some little notice of your intention." "Come, come, no foolery!" said Mr. Hartley, "turn round to us again, we will not notice the want of rouge; turn round, Caroline, and embrace your child!"—"Impossible!" said Mrs. Hartley.—"Not impossible!" said Adriana, advancing to her mother, and bending her knee; the crimson mant-

ling in her cheeks, tears starting to her eyes.—"Not impossible!" said Hartley, "for look at her again, and behold the picture of yourself! see that Caroline Cosby, who some eighteen years since *was* the"——"Hold! what signifies your chronological accuracy, ending with *was?*" said Mrs. Hartley, affecting liveliness as she held out her hand, and kissed the cheek of her daughter: "I am glad to see you, my love; come, sit down, as you *have* seen me, you may as well stay now; but, I confess, I was not exactly prepared for the intrusion. Should you have known me, Adriana? I don't think I should have recollected *you* let me have seen you where I would."—"I should never have forgotten either of my parents," replied Adriana, warmly. "You do us more honour than

we deserve, I fear, Adriana," said Hartley, with a half sigh. "Well, now having broke the ice, I believe I must leave you together, for I am going to meet Sir Harry Turton at Tattersall's."—"You were successful last night?" said Mrs. Hartley.—"I wish I could answer in the affirmative, Ma'am."—"O misericorde! I wish I was not so very like you," said Mrs. Hartley; "but you remember the draft I mentioned yesterday?"—"I remember it, certainly," said Hartley, laying a stress on the word remember.—"Then you will let me have it?" Hartley's hand was on the lock of the door; he bowed, smiled to Adriana in return for her respectful courtesy, and left the room. "You are very tall! how old are you, Adriana?" asked her mother.—"Seventeen last November, Ma'am."—"Are

you sure? is it possible, child! you must be mistaken!"--"I believe not Ma'am."--"Yes, yes, you are right, I dare say; for it was natural for you to remember, what it is natural, perhaps, that I should forget: but even now, I recollect the gloomy month of November, shut up at the manor in Devonshire, not a soul to speak to but the nurse, the apothecary, my mother, and my husband!—You do not recollect the manor, Adriana?"--"No, Ma'am."--"Well then, you shall judge of its capabilities, for I mean to spare you to Mrs. Cosby; she longs to see you."—"I hope my grandmamma is well?" said Adriana.—"I believe so; I dare say she is, for I think Davers said, she saw a letter in her hand-writing yesterday, but I had not time to open it. You shall stay a day or two with us though, Adriana, and you shall see,——

tell me, what would you like to see?—take your choice." The heart of Adriana was full: she was disappointed in her parents; her ripened judgment, and her discriminating intellect could not overlook the apathy, the levity, the unfeeling coldness, which were displayed in their manners and sentiments; but it did not become her, she well knew, to indulge these thoughts. "You hardly know what to fix on, I suppose?"—"Is the exhibition open, Madam?" asked Adriana, ashamed of her silence:—"The exhibition!" repeated Mrs. Hartley, in a tone of surprise,—"yes, it is: what you have a taste for paintings?"—"I am very fond of them, Madam."—"You shall go, child! I will get Davers to take you there some morning, when she is at lei-

sure; but Heaven knows when that will be, for Davers does not much like to be put out of her way—heigho!" yawning and stretching. "I believe I must ring for her to come and beautify me, for I have an engagement at three o'clock;—we shall dine *en famille* to day, Adriana, so you will meet us at six: in the mean time, take possession of the room where you breakfasted, and amuse yourself in any way that is most agreeable to you. Adieu, my dear child!" shaking her by the hand. Adriana courtesied, yet could not speak: she quitted the boudoir, and having found her way into the breakfast-room, she threw herself into a chair, and gave vent to her full heart in tears.

The *sang froid* with which her parents treated her, wounded her more than the

most forbidding *hauteur* could have done; the latter she might have hoped to disperse by respectful and dutiful behaviour, but the former exhibited so much of selfish apathy, that she feared she should never make herself a nearer interest in their hearts. Mrs. Hartley affected to consider her as a child, and had not condescended to enter into any thing more than a *dialogue*, which was adapted to the medium of a child's understanding. The pride of Adriana had here felt an acute stab: she was conscious of her own mental powers, but she felt they required drawing out, to be known; for diffident of her talents, her natural timidity, and her ignorance of the world, gave her an appearance of shyness and reserve, which speedily melted

away before the genial smile of encouragement. "Alas! how is my mother altered! the bright sparkling of her eye, the bright bloom of her cheek, are gone," sighed she; "what a faded countenance is here! Sure she is out of health; and yet she will send her child from her—that child, whose first wish would be to show her duty and her love!—Love!" repeated she, "my mother will not let me love her!"

CHAP. III.

In trying to read, in long fits of musing, in looking from the window, and seeing gay throngs of people and of carriages, yet often seeing them unheeded, passed the first morning of our heroine's residence in London. She recollected herself in time to be ready at the

dinner hour, and with a praise-worthy vanity (if any thing denominated vanity can be praise-worthy), she exerted herself in disposing her fine auburn tresses to the greatest advantage; she put on a robe of finest muslin, a string of coral round her neck set off her complexion, which was dazzlingly brilliant, and a pleased consciousness suffused her cheek as she surveyed herself in the glass, convinced that her appearance had nothing of that childishness in it, which could authorize her mother to treat her as she did.

She was some time alone in the drawing-room; the last dinner bell had rung, when Mrs. Hartley entered. She started back on seeing Adriana, while Adriana started in her turn, on seeing the beautiful and dazzling person of her mother! Roses

and lilies bloomed on her countenance, her eyes were animated and sparkling, her dress was elegant, the lustre of her brilliants exceeded any thing which she had ever seen, and were most tastefully displayed. "What a renovation!" thought Adriana; but, alas! poor novice! art cannot renovate, it can only disguise. "How are you, my dear?" said Mrs. Hartley, recovering herself: "come, we must go to dinner, I suppose Hartley is waiting for us:" and she condescended to lead her daughter to the eating-room. As they entered it, Hartley advanced, and bowed to them with the same politeness with which he would have received visitors of distinction. Adriana was placed at the right hand of her mother. "Where to-night, Mrs. Hartley?"

asked her husband, after fixing his eyes for two whole minutes on Adriana, and just then resuming his fork.—" Lady Betty Kirwan's,--it will be quite a cram!" " Ah! you will initiate Adriana at once into the mysteries of fashion,—she goes of course?"—" Of course she does not!" replied Mrs. Hartley; " how could you think of such a thing? what! introduce a child into the world!—dear Hartley, you have lost your senses."—" And you your memory, I fear, Caroline. How old were you when that child was born?" and he looked in his wife's face with a provoking archness.—" Not old enough to know right from wrong, of that I am very sure," said the lady, with a sarcastic expression of countenance, and affecting a sigh.—" Some people, if they were to live to the age of the antediluvians,

would never know right from wrong," answered Hartley, coolly.—"No, that they certainly would not," retorted Mrs. Hartley, with quickness; "for instance, your present proposition is so reverse from all that is right."—"And for instance, Mrs. Hartley, your setting yourself against it, is so much the reverse of it also, that for the sake of being a little perverse, I say you shall take Adriana along with you!"—"For the sake of being a little perverse," answered the lady, imitating him with great effect, "I say I will not." "No, pray, Sir, let me remain at home," said Adriana, turning a beseeching countenance on her father, as she marked the indignant glance of his eye turned towards her mother, "believe me, Sir, I have not the least wish!"—"I

did not consult your wish," said Hartley, "I merely consulted my own plersure." "Perfectly right! you merely consulted your own pleasure, and you did it with a view to teaze me; thank you, Sir!" bending her head.—"You are perfectly welcome, Madam," returned Hartley, bowing and smiling: "I have the honour to drink your health; Miss Hartley, my love to you;—look up, child, and put on your best countenance, for you must do a little execution to-night on the hearts of Lady Betty's beaux."—"Ridiculous and provoking!" said Mrs. Hartley, turning up her lip.—"Adriana, suppose you get me your porte-feuille, I will look at your drawings now," said Hartley.—Adriana rose, and left the room. "She's a lovely creature," said Hartley, looking after her, "and instead of sending her

down to the manor, we must keep her here a few weeks, and she will make her fortune. She is now in the very flush of beauty: take her with you to-night, Caroline, and see if the men are not about her like a swarm of bees round the hive." "Round the honey, you should have said, as she is such a collection of sweets. The child is well enough:" this was said poutingly.—"The young woman is charming!"—"Come, come, don't let me hear any more nonsense: if she catches any of your rhapsodies, you will make her as vain as"—"Her mother!" interposed Hartley with quickness.—"Pshaw! how you trifle, Mr. Hartley! Pray have you got the draft I wanted? and also I must have a reinforcement for to-night."—"I can ill spare you either;

but take Adriana with you, and you shall have both."—"No, Sir, I am not to be bribed to do what my judgment——' "Your judgment!" repeated Hartley, sceptically.—"Yes, Sir, my judgment! By woeful experience, I know the ill effects of marrying too early."--"Now you are quite serious, Caroline, and I can chime in with you, for you know I have had my share of *dear-bought experience*!" Mrs. Hartley hummed a tune, and Adriana entered with her drawings. She placed them before her father: with some quickness Mrs. Hartley caught a parcel of them, and looked them carelessly over, not appearing to notice either beauties or defects. "Designs or copies, Adriana?" asked Hartley.—"A few of them are sketches from nature: that is one; you remember the view, perhaps, Sir?"—"Oh!

perfectly, and it is very well done; you had enough of the majestic in Cumberand." "The sublime and beautiful!" said Mrs. Hartley, yet without noticing the sketch about which they were talking: "but you are covering one with your arm there so cleverly, Miss Hartley, I must see what it is."—"No, I pray, Madam! no, pray, no!" said Adriana, with a beseeching countenance.—"I must, I will, child—give it me instantly!" Trembling and abashed, it was yielded. A girl was kneeling to a lady and gentleman, who were raising her up: their countenances, bent towards her, bespoke the liveliest emotions of joy; the child's face was concealed.—"The happy return!" was written under it. The curiosity of Hartley had been raised when he had remarked the reluctance of Adri-

ana to shew this piece, and he had risen from his seat, and looked at it over the shoulder of his wife. 'Twas paint, 'twas life! the elegant profile, the bewitching smile of her mother, the manly form, the open brow, of her father, had been treasured up in the memory of their child, and had been faithfully depicted. "And this is your doing, and your design?" asked Hartley: "I fear you will be a flattering painter, Adriana; we could not have done you as much justice from our recollection, I fear."—"I was changing every day, Sir,"—("The Cynthia of the minute," said Mrs. Hartley, in an under voice)--"while you,—"--"Oh! many long days have passed over our heads since we could have sat for these likenesses: but, indeed, child, you have excelled yourself here, as much as you have ex-

celled us; I give you credit for the idea." "It is romantic enough," said Mrs. Hartley.—"Romance and enthusiasm are the natural attendants of youth," said Hartley, answering his lady, and again intently surveying the countenance of his daughter.—"You have not given me the draft I desired, Mr. Hartley."—"Neither have you given me the promise I desired, Madam; till then—"—"Take away your drawings, child!" said Mrs. Hartley, hastily.—"No, Adriana, let them remain; it was I who sent for them, I have not done with them." Mrs. Hartley leaned her head on one hand, resting her elbow on the table, and with the other hand began to play with the stopper of a decanter. "The person who confers an obligation, demands a little concession on the part of the obliged."—

"Obligation! concession! obliged!—I do not comprehend your language, Mr. Hartley."—"I think you do not," was his answer—"but you comprehend what I wish you to do this evening:—probably Harcourt will be at Lady Betty's, and—" "I am decided, Mr. Hartley; give me the draft, and some bills, for my carriage is at the door."—"Madam, I can be as obstinate as yourself,—you shall not have either."—"No, Sir?" said Mrs. Hartley, in a tone of cool contempt.—No, Madam!" with an air of more *sang froid* than passion. "It is well,—take care how you provoke me to revenge!" Adriana hid her face with her handkerchief; Mrs. Hartley moved towards the door.—"How, Caroline! revenge!" cried Hartley, starting from his seat—"no, no, you dare not!" He sat down again: the

frown which had rumpled his brow, as he said the last words, was dispersed.—"I should like to know how," said he, affecting a laugh.--"Know you not, that where there is a will, there will be a way?" said Mrs. Hartley, with much impression in her manner—"take care, Hartley, I once more ask, will you give the draft?" "Will you take her with you?" asked Hartley, pointing to Adriana, whose emotion prevented her hearing what was said.—"I will not," said Mrs. Hartley. "Then, by Heavens! not a farthing will I give to save you from ruin!"—"Remember your words, Sir, they have meaning in them—one day you may understand their force!" and Mrs. Hartley quitted the room, flinging to the door with such violence, that Adriana was roused from her position; but catching a

glance of her father's face, she turned hastily from him, frightened at beholding the furious expression which was there apparent. He rose from his chair, and left the room.

Poor Adriana! who does not pity her, what heart does not ache as it beholds her during this melancholy and solitary evening, reviewing the scenes of the last day, and with a sickening sigh, confessing to herself, that home is not the home she has depicted—that her parents are not the parents she has pourtrayed? She already longs to leave London, though she is an utter stranger to all its pleasures and attractions. She pants for the time when she is to be sent to her grandmother: her heart glowing with all the warm and benevolent feelings, longs

to make itself an interest in some kindred heart: her father, her mother, are too much attached to the world, to find room for the social affections; but her grandmother's age and infirmities must keep her from the scenes of dissipation, even though her inclinations pointed to them; and to cheer her evening of life; to lull her to rest, when visited by pain and suffering; by cheerful and innocent gaiety, to exhilarate her spirits, to be to her that daughter she had lost—that daughter, who appeared to neglect her parent; these hopes were fresh and ardent in the mind of our heroine, and prevented her from yielding entirely to despondency.

CHAP. IV.

When Adriana arose in the morning, she went to the parlour which seemed to be allotted for her use. Here her solitude was not interrupted, except by the servant who brought her her breakfast. She tried to draw; but several times her tears blistered the paper. About noon, when the man returned to make up the fire, she enquired for her father and mother.—"Mr. Hartley is in his own room, Ma'am; Mrs. Hartley has given or-

ders not to be at home during the whole of the day."—"Not even to her child, I suppose!" sighed Adriana. She made no answer to the servant, but fixed her eyes upon the drawing which lay before her. Mr. Hartley dined out; Mrs. Hartley had her dinner served in the boudoir; and as our heroine ate her solitary meal, she could not help drawing a comparison in her mind, of the cheerful and happy group by which she used to be surrounded at Mrs. Villers's table.

The period of infancy she had often heard depicted as the period of the most unalloyed happiness; she was tempted already to subscribe to the truth of this representation, and to look back with regret to the days

that were gone, as those in perspective did not present her a flattering prospect.

About eight o'clock, Adriana was roused from a long reverie, into which she had fallen, by her mother. Mrs. Hartley entered the room, and started on beholding her daughter; she was going out, and came into that parlour while her chair put into the hall. She sat down on a seat by the door, and putting her hand to her head, seemed to pant for breath. "You are not well, I fear, my dear Madam?" said Adriana, going to her, and gently taking her hand, which fell in Mrs. Hartley's lap. A deep sigh issued from the bosom of her mother. "Yes, yes, I am very well, I thank you," said she

faintly; but she did not look at her child as she spoke, and she withdrew her hand, though Adriana thought not till it had gently pressed hers.—"I should be *so* happy, my dear Mamma," said Adriana, "if I could be of the least comfort to you. You do not know the pleasure it would give me, to be of the smallest service to you!" Her voice faltered, for her heart was brimful with affection, and she felt that it was impossible to express all she meant. "I hope you *will* be happy, Adriana," said Mrs. Hartley; "I want neither comfort nor service." Her voice fell though as she repeated the word "comfort," and a convulsive sob seemed to proclaim that her words and her feelings were not in unison. She rose from the seat.—"The chair is ready,"

said she. "Fool that I am!" She wildly threw her arms round the neck of Adriana; she kissed her forehead with fervour, and then darted into the hall. The roof of the chair was raised, it was closed again—and Adriana returned to her solitude; but her whole frame trembled—she knew not why. The behaviour of Mrs. Hartley had been so strange, so wild, and so empassioned, that she feared her reason was disordered. She could not otherwise account for the contrariety of her manner, nor for that hasty impulse of feeling with which she had clapsed her to her arms! Yet Adriana recalled this action again and again to her mental vision; her heart thrilled with delight at the retrospection; it told her, that she had yet an interest

in the heart of her mother.—It told her, that she should yet be the happy daughter she had depicted!

This evening was passed like the last; and when she arose the next morning, she seemed to be more familiarized to her lonely situation; for mechanically, she carried with her her work and drawing apparatus into the parlour. She was, as usual, uninterrupted, except by the confusion and bustle which seemed to pervade the house. Loud and quick steps resounded through the hall, and the noisy laugh of the domestics often reached her ears. Wondering at this unlicensed mirth, she pursued her occupations till four o'clock, when a violent rap at the street door, made her almost start out of her chair,

so tremblingly alive was she become to every noise, from the irritable state of her nerves.

The door of the room where she sat was flung open, and Mr Hartley entered. His countenance appeared wild and ruffled; his hair was dishevelled; he strode across the floor, and grasping the hand of Adriana, said, "Prepare to set out *instantly* for the manor. —Your grandmother will receive you. —You will there be out of the reach of danger.—Johnson will conduct you. —Be ready within an hour from this time!"—"Shall I not see—is my mamma?" asked Adriana tremblingly and hesitatingly. Mr. Hartley hastily let go her hand. He stamped his foot on the ground. "Torture me not

with questions," said he; "but listen to me while I have the power of utterance. On your going to the manor, and your peaceable and obedient behaviour there, will depend the forfeiture, or the inheritance of my favour through life! I have sent an express to your grandmother; he will travel all night, and being already on his road will precede you by many hours; therefore Mrs. Cosby will be prepared to receive you. *Ask no questions as to the cause* of this *sudden journey;* the *knowledge* of it *could be of no avail. Sufficient* is it for *you* to hear, that *the event* which has *accelerated* it, has perhaps coloured *your future* days.—That it *has disgraced* the name of *Hartley.* Distraction's in the thought!—But what am I saying?"—and he clenched

his hands in agony, and smote them against his forehead. Adriana caught his hands. "Oh my dear papa!" cried she, "what is the matter? Pray—*pray* be calm!" and she unconsciously kissed the hand which she had seized. "That voice, that look, and talk of calmness!" said he, "child, you will drive me frantic.—Yet you are not to blame. Do what I require in *silent obedience*," said he, turning to her with a steady voice, "and may Heaven bless you!"—"Amen!" said Adriana, as she involuntarily bent her knee, to receive a parent's blessing. Hartley stooped to raise her, and as he did so, he hastily pressed his dry and burning lips to her cheek. "Go, go now," said he, struggling to speak, "go and prepare yourself!—remember!—no ques-

tions!—I can depend on Johnson, he will convey you safely." Adriana's knees smote each other as she obeyed, and as she hastily gathered up her drawing implements, her hands shook so, that she was every moment in danger of letting them slip through her fingers. Mr. Hartley had turned from her; he leant one elbow on the mantle-piece, and covered his face with his hand. It was in this attitude he stood, when Adriana gave him a last look, as her hand rested on the lock of the door.—She longed, yet dreaded to speak to him, —"Yet once again;"—but the timid accents died on her lips, and she went to her chamber. There a maid-servant waited, who told her she had received orders to assist her in packing.

The servant examined with scrutinizing curiosity the tearful eyes of Adriana, and with loud sighs on her part, and exclamations of "Dear heart!" and "Sad doings!" endeavoured to draw her to converse; but Adriana was naturally averse to the familiarity of domestics, even had she not recollected the injuctions of her father; and, in silence, she hastened to pack up her wardrobe. Yet the thoughts of going without beholding her mother, filled her heart almost to bursting: she stole along the passage, and listened at the door of the boudoir. All was quiet. "Shall I disturb my mamma?" thought she. "And yet will she be angry, when I only approach to bid her a long farewell!"

She tapped gently at the door.—No answer was returned; she gained a little more courage, and opened it; but she saw not her mother. The fire had not been lighted in the grate, the ashes remained where they had fallen the preceding day; confusion was apparent in the whole apartment; bits of paper were strewed in every direction, and the playful and petted marmoset was busily employed in tearing off the fringe from the elegant cushions of the chairs. "My mamma must be ill then," thought Adriana; and in the same moment, she crossed the boudoir, and opened a door which led through it to her mother's bed-room. The curtains were closely drawn; she stole on tiptoe to the side of the bed.—She put aside the curtain;—but what was her surprise, when

she perceived that the bed had not been lain in. "My mamma did not come home last night," whispered she. "Alas! I shall not see her!" and tears forced their way down her cheeks. At that minute she heard her name pronounced by a servant. "The trunks are in, Ma'am, and Mr. Johnson is ready." Adriana threw a wild look round the boudoir, and went down stairs. In the hall, Johnson waited her approach; he took her hand, and assisting her into the chaise, placed himself at her side, and they were soon rattling over the pavement.

CHAP. V.

THE evening was wet and dreary; the lamps were already lighted; and as Adriana's eyes caught the passing objects, she could not help thinking of her extraordinary visit to that city, which she was now quitting so suddenly. The cause of her abrupt departure she could not guess, but she feared it was a most serious one; though of what nature she could not divine;

but the words and the manner of her father were still impressed on her ear.

Johnson was respectful in his deportment, but did not attempt to engage her in conversation, so that she found herself at full liberty to indulge her thoughts and conjectures.

The lamps of the metropolis were soon succeeded by darkness. Adriana had frequently heard stories of highwaymen infesting the heaths which skirted London, and had often shuddered at the idea of being attacked by them ; but such was the present state of her mind, that she felt as though she could have seen them ride up to the chaise windows without the smallest emotion ; so entirely was she engrossed

by the recent scenes which she had witnessed.

Our heroine was conveyed two stages in safety that night, and pursued her journey early the following morning.

It was late in the evening of the fourth day, when Johnson told her they were nearly arrived at the manor. The weather was clear and frosty, the stars sparkled in the firmament, and shot their rays between the high trees of a wood, which overshadowed the road with their branches, although despoiled of their foliage, through which they were passing. An opening vista yielded them a partial view of the manor. It was situated in a deep and narrow vale, surrounded by hills and enveloped by

woods, except on one side, where it opened to the majestic ocean.

Adriana looked with anxious curiosity towards the mansion, which was soon to become her residence, but she could discern nothing accurately, except lights flashing from different windows instantaneously, and then disappearing as quickly. "There seems to be some bustle in the house," said Johnson; "yet I do not think the old lady sees much company. Perhaps they hear the chaise coming through the wood, it being a clear still night, and so are preparing themselves for your approach." As he said this they drove, by a gentle sweep, to the door; a servant appeared at it—Adriana got out of it, and followed him across a large

paved court to another door, which opened into a spacious hall; she was then ushered into a large parlour, wainscotted with black oak, where two candles only served to show its gloomy appearance in proper colours.

"How is Mrs. Cosby?—How is my grandmamma?" asked Adriana. "The Lord's hand is upon her.—She is just gone, Miss," said the servant, who was a lank-haired, sallow-visaged man; "soul and body hardly kept together." "What do you mean?" asked Adriana.—"Is she dying?—Good Heavens! am I then come to see her die?"—"She is not long for this world, Miss," said the man, shaking his head; "but death is the end of us all, and when our time is come, we must go!" He lifted up

his eyes as he said these words, and drawled them out in the true "nasal twang heard at conventicle." "Good God!" said Adriana, "how dreadful!" as she sank into a chair. "Nothing dreadful in the summons of the Lord,—but it is *dreadful* to take his name in vain," said the man continuing his tone of sanctity. "May I not see her?—cannot you send a female servant to conduct me to her room?"—"I will see," said Ezekiel, walking away slowly and erectly. "Oh! hasten, hasten!" cried the almost frantic Adriana. "She will die, and I shall not receive her blessing!"—The Lord's will be done," said Ezekiel as he quitted the room.

Adriana's sufferings during his absence, exceeded any thing she had ever

felt before. The hope which she had cherished of being a comfort to her grandmother, of making herself an interest in her affections, of cheering the evening of her days, was now utterly annihilated. She was come to witness the "last struggles of expiring nature." Her heart palpitated, her whole frame shook, but she tried to rally her feelings; and when a decent elderly female appeared, she rose as if to follow her immediately to the chamber of death.

"Mrs. Cosby is delirious, Miss," said the woman, taking her hand respectfully, with much compassion depicted on her countenance, the tears coursing each other down her cheeks. "She cannot know you, dear young

lady; had you not better spare yourself the shock of such a sight? This night will probably terminate her sufferings."—"Does she suffer much then?" asked Adriana, pressing the hard hand of the speaker.—"She *has* greatly suffered," answered she. "Oh, let me see her! I am equal to any sight: but I cannot bear the thoughts of letting my grandmother die, and not going to her when I am the only relative near her." "The only one, indeed," said the domestic, sighing.—"Will you make use of my arm, Miss? but first you must take a glass of wine." Ezekiel having entered with some, Adriana hastily swallowed half a glass, and then with tottering steps proceeded up a large stone stair-case, through a long matted gallery into the apartment of Mrs. Cosby.

A faint light illumined the room, Adriana saw nothing around her; her eyes were earnestly fixed on the foot of the bed, as if she would have pierced through the curtain. Her conductress gently put it aside; and the wild and sunken eyes of the invalid rested on the form of her grand-daughter. She shrieked, and raised herself in her bed. "Oh, Caroline Cosby! is it *you* I see?" said she, muttering between her teeth. "You are come to keep me back from Heaven—to make me curse. No! no! no!—She is in France.—Away—away. I will not see thee!—'Tis here! 'tis here!" said she, laying her hand on her heart. "Oh, Caroline! 'tis *here*, and 'twas my child who planted it!—No! no! 'twas I 'twas I." She clasped her hands in agony, her features were convulsed and distorted. She was silent a few mi-

nutes, then whispered, "God have mercy on me!" They were the last words she ever spoke. Adriana had sunk down at the foot of the bed. She had seen the wild looks of the poor sufferer—she had heard every word she had uttered, and her self-possession had quitted her just at the period when Mrs. Cosby had yielded her breath for ever!

When Adriana regained her recollection, she found herself in bed in a large and old-fashioned apartment; the elderly domestic, who had conducted her to Mrs. Cosby's room, sitting at her side, her countenance heavy, her eyes swollen with tears, brought every circumstance to her memory, and taking the hand of Martha (for that was the name of the servant,) she said,

in a low voice, "My grandmamma died without knowing I was near her.—She *did* not know me!" and she burst into tears. "Compose yourself, my dear Miss Cosby—Miss Hartley, I should say; but you remind me so much of your mamma, that I can't somehow help calling you Miss Cosby in my mind, when I an't speaking"—"Do I?" asked Adriana, unconsciously smiling through her tears, and feeling a gratification in being thought like her mother.—"Ah! if my mamma were but here now! if she had but been here before my grandmamma died!"—"Ah, if she had," repeated Martha;—"but,—"How long had my grandmamma been ill?" asked Adriana. "My mamma did know it, I am sure."—"Not the worst of it, Miss, though my dear mistress

had been drooping a long, long time. But such was her consideration, and her fear of interrupting the comfort of Mrs. Hartley, that she would not make her acquainted with her illness. The very *last* letter she wrote, about ten day since, she could scarcely guide her pen; but then she would not let me write for her, though, poor dear lady, her hand trembled so when she had done, that she could not fold it up. She went to lie down, and ordered me to seal, and to fold it; but not on any account to direct it, for fear of frightening Mrs. Hartley. I did put in a bit of a line, as she left me, just saying that she was but very poorly, and worse than she spoke of. But, perhaps, Mrs. Hartley, thought my fears made me think the worst; or

may be, she could not well make out my writing, for I am but a poor one with my pen. However, your grandmamma did not seem to get worse till the night before last, and then when the express came with the letter, she fell into a convulsion fit, and had scarcely a moment of reason afterwards. Oh, Miss! I shall never forget her clasping and wringing her hands, and calling on her Caroline—on her child. I *did* not see the letter, for she tore it into a thousand pieces in an instant—but I am sure it brought her bad news. Well, no matter—she will be an angel in heaven."

"Where is Mr. Johnson, who accompanied me here?" asked Adriana, trying to rally her feelings, and to exert

herself.—"He is below, Miss, waiting only to speak to you before he sets out again for London."—"Will not my papa come down to attend the funeral?" "I fancy not, Miss—indeed, I fancy he is not——but you will see Mr. Johnson?"—"Certainly," said Adriana; and with the assistance of Martha, she instantly arose: she trembled as she dressed herself,—all the horrors of the last night were still before her. Again she heard the heart-piercing tones of the dying Mrs. Cosby; again she saw the wild glare of those eyes, which were so speedily fixed in death. She recollected the careless indifference with which her mother had mentioned an unopened letter from Mrs. Cosby. "Perhaps it is still unopened," thought she. "Good Heavens! what compunc-

tion, what bitter compunction will Mrs. Hartley feel, when she hears her mother is no more!" As these thoughts passed in our heroine's mind, her colour varied, and her countenance changed. She clasped her hands together. "Do not take on so, dear Miss Hartley!" said the attentive Martha, "but bear yourself up in this hour of trouble. You will want all your courage, my dear Miss."—"I think I shall—I think I *do*;" said Adriana in a hurried voice. "But show me to Johnson."

CHAP. VI.

JOHNSON rose respectfully at Adriana's entrance. Martha left them together.—"I would not leave the manor, Miss Hartley, without asking if you have any thing for me to do?"—"Nothing, but to give my duty to my papa and mamma," answered Adriana: "but I suppose one, if not both of them will be down, as

soon as they are apprized of the late melancholy event?"—"Why, no Ma'am, I rather think not; indeed I know that they will not—that they cannot be here," added Johnson; and "Mr. Selwyn, the clergyman, has kindly promised to undertake to see the old lady's remains decently disposed of. You will of course remain here, just as if the event had not happened; no danger can possibly come to you here; and the servants of your late grandmother will wait on you, and serve you as their mistress, till——"—"Till my papa thinks of some situation for me?" said Adriana, enquiringly, yet with a doubtful accent.--"Why, at present he has not time for much thought; he is ere this in France," said Johnson, "and——'' "In France!" repeated Adriana, "in France! then Mrs. Cosby's words were

not the offspring of delirium. Oh! tell me, Mr. Johnson,--no more questions will I ask—Oh! tell me, for this proceeds not from idle curiosity,--is Mrs. Hartley gone with my papa?"—Johnson hesitated, and then laconically answered—"She went first." "And he follows her?" said Adriana."—"Yes, he follows her," repeated Johnson. "Are you going to them?"—"No, Miss, I am not, I am going to settle matters in London; but I must not answer questions, this is against my orders."—"Oh! one, only one more," cried Adriana: "shall you write to them?" "That is very uncertain, Miss Hartley." "O! if you do, tell them of my sorrow, tell them of my lonely situation, but assure them of my dutiful behaviour, of my obedience."—"I wish you your health, and happiness, Miss," said Johnson, and

he quietly walked out of the room, leaving Adriana to a lonely review of her situation.

Her parents had left England: that some fearful mystery attended their disappearance, to which she had no clue, was certain; and though she could not divine the cause, her conjectures pointed at the embarrassment of their fortune; but she had seen no appearance of this; and the death of Mrs. Cosby might have caused an alteration in their favour, if this was really the case, but this Johnson would have known. Though the behaviour of Mr. and Mrs. Hartley had not impressed her with much reverence, yet she felt that they were her parents; she felt that she could love them, if they would suffer her to do so; but they had now

entirely deserted her,—they were gone to a foreign country: Mrs. Hartley had suffered her only parent to breathe her last, unattended, but by her servants; her child had witnessed the agonies of her last moments, and was now in the deepest solitude to drag on her days, far from the voice of sympathy, far from that social intercourse, which she had herself formed to partake. It required a strong mind to take a retrospective view of these circumstances, and not to despond; a just sense of religion enabled our heroine to do this: for as it has been justly remarked by Count de Valmont, "it is her peculiar property to supply the place of experience, and to give to the young the wisdom of age."

After an hour given to the bitterest me-

ditations, Adriana began to reflect, that she ought to be thankful for many blessings and comforts, which were still her's. Martha, the faithful attendant of her grandmother, seemed to have a feeling heart, and to have done her duty in her station, from the purest motives. The household were to go on as usual, till orders were received from Mr. Hartley; of course, therefore, she should have the benefit of this good creature's attendance, and she seemed willing to do all in her power to render the manor a comfortable residence.

During the bustle incident to the preparations for the funeral, Martha having procured the materials, Adriana, with the assistance of one of the female servants, had made herself a mourning robe, and

finding all the servants meant to pay the last instance of respect to their mistress, by following her to the tomb, she desired that she also might be suffered to make one in the melancholy procession. Martha would have dissuaded her, but she was not to be dissuaded; and, wrapped in a long cloak, with a crape veil thrown over her head, she leant on the arm of Martha, and followed the funeral, which was slowly borne along by the old tenants of the family. The church was almost contiguous to the manor; it was filled with the villagers and tenantry, who all respected the late Mrs. Cosby. Mr. Selwyn read the service in an awful and impressive manner; tears rose to his eyes; tears streamed down the cheeks of most of his hearers. When the ceremony was concluded, Adriana, again sustained by

Martha, returned to the manor; she had performed a melancholy duty, and though her spirits were depressed, yet her mind was tranquil.

In the evening, Ezekiel opened the door of the parlour where she was sitting, and, in his usual precise mode of speech said, "The Reverend Mr. Selwyn;" and the rector followed him into the room. "I fear you will think me an intruder, Miss Hartley," said he, in a benignant tone of voice, taking her hand, and placing himself a chair close to her's, "but I could not be easy any longer without introducing myself. Mrs. Selwyn is much indisposed, or I should have deputed her to this pleasure, instead of myself."—"I am very much obliged to you," said Adriana, pensively.—"Not at all!"

said Mr. Selwyn, "it is my duty, you know, to visit the afflicted, and my respect for the memory of Mrs. Cosby, independent of every other consideration, would have led me here, to have paid every attention in my power to her grandchild, if Miss Hartley's conduct had not already claimed it for herself!"—"Alas! I deserve no praise," said Adriana.—"We none of us can judge as to our deserts," said Mr. Selwyn, smiling: "your situation has been a very particular one, and I perceive, with admiration, a fortitude which is greatly beyond your years!"

"I was at the bedside of Mrs. Cosby when she breathed her last, I saw you enter the chamber; the effects of that interview I was not surprised at, but hearing how nobly you have since strug-

gled with affliction, I would not intrude on you till this time."—"You then were well acquainted with my grandmamma, Sir?" said Adriana.—"I had been upon terms of intimacy with her, ever since I came to this living nearly eight years since," answered Mr. Selwyn.—"I wish my mamma had been here when she died, to watch her last moments!" sighed Adriana.—"I heartily join in that wish," said Mr. Selwyn.—"I fear Mrs. Cosby was much affected at the idea of her daughter's going to France," said Adriana, wishing to gain some information on the subject, yet not daring to trust her eyes to look at Mr. Selwyn.—"Such an unlicenced step was enough to——" Mr. Selwyn stopped, he seemed to catch himself, and looking with surprise in the face of Adriana—"You knew then

that Mrs. Hartley was gone abroad?"—"No, I knew nothing previous to my arrival at this place, all was doubt and fearful mystery; so it still continues indeed, though the dying words of my grandmama made an impression on me, never, never to be effaced! and Johnson, the man who accompanied me here, acknowledged before he left me, that my parents were gone abroad: my papa, indeed, charged me to ask no questions; I try to obey his injunctions, though Heaven only knows the anxiety I have suffered!—the anxiety which I continue to suffer," added she.

"Mr. Hartley was right; I dare say he will inform you all that it is necessary for you to know, and imagine his silence proceeds from parental regard, and from

his unwillingness to give you pain."—"Then there are circumstances of which the knowledge would give me pain?" said Adriana, with quickness.—"I suspect there are; that is, by Mr. Hartley's silence, we may conjecture so."—"And my mamma also was silent, when she parted, though she pressed me fervently to her breast."—"Did Mrs. Hartley then take leave of you?" asked Mr. Selwyn, in a tone of surprise—"Incredible!"—"No, she did not say she was going," answered Adriana, "but there was something uncommon in her manner when I last saw her."—"Uncommon in her conduct also," said Selwyn, in an under tone. "Well, dear Miss Hartley, let us drop the subject; and do you continue to exercise that forbearance and patience, which you have already called to your

assistance.—I hope and trust that you are now in a safe asylum, as every thing will go on as usual in this house till orders arrive from Mr. Hartley. Martha is an honest and respectable creature, she will at all times do what she can to make you comfortable; and you may trust sober Ezekiel, whose zeal is well-intentioned, although he will now and then encroach on my office, and if he finds an opportunity, will give you a little spiritual advice. Mrs. Cosby was very indulgent to her domestics, they had their own way, and Ezekiel had for some years, prior to my appearance in the parish, been a frequenter of a conventicle in the adjoining village: he always pays me the compliment of coming to hear me on a Sunday morning; in the evening he goes to Mr. Spintext. We shall be very hap-

py, Miss Hartley, to see you at the rectory, as often as you would wish to vary the scene."

"No, Sir, I am much obliged to you for your kindness," interrupted Adriana hastily, "but on every account it will be best for me to remain here: indeed, public decency requires on the recent death of my grand-mamma, such a seclusion for a time, and by such conduct I shall certainly be pleasing my father. How long do you suppose it may be, Sir, ere he returns?"

"Heaven only knows!" answered Selwyn, with emotion: "the business on which—not knowing the business—the motives—I should think his stay is very uncertain—but do not be surprised, my

dear young lady, if it should be very much prolonged; public affairs are just now in so critical a state, that it is expected the peace will be a very short-lived one: it was very hazardous to go to the other side of the water at this period, for, perhaps, Mr. Hartley may be detained there against his inclinations. But I would not willingly alarm you," perceiving the fixed eagerness with which Adriana regarded him, "I would only prepare you for the worst, as there seems more than a possibility of that worst occurring; for I should not be surprised if to-morrow's post brought us a declaration of war."

"And in that case will the English be detained in France, Sir?" asked Adriana. —"I should fear they would," answered

Mr. Selwyn; "but as this is only a probability, and we will trust a remote one, we will not let it disturb us. But I must again recur to the subject which you so dexterously evaded. Seclusion, the absolute seclusion of this house, I can by no means suffer:— have patience, my dear young lady," continued he, perceiving Adriana was going to speak, "and hear me out; I do not mean that you shall leave it to-day, or to-morrow, but your health and your spirits must suffer from an absolute abstraction from the world."

"I mean to take exercise," said Adriana, "I have been used to it, and suspect I cannot do without it. These grounds, the park, and the cliffs which overlook the sea, are all new to me, and will afford me charming views."—"And the close

and more retired walk to the rectory is not without its charms, believe me," said Mr. Selwyn, smiling: "promise me that you will sometimes bend your steps that way. Mrs. Selwyn I fear will not be able immediately to come to you, for she is recovering but slowly from a very severe illness; I have a fair friend at Oakley, not more than an hour's walk, who will be very happy in the pleasure of your acquaintance; I have just resigned my office as guardian of her fortune, though I yet assert my claim with regard to her person: she will be delighted to be introduced to you."—"You are very good, Sir," said Adriana, languidly.—"Come, come, be sincere, young lady, and do not say, 'you are very good,' when at the same time you think me officious and troublesome."—"No, believe me, I

cannot think that, Sir," said Adriana, colouring at the accusation: "the benevolence, the goodness of your intentions, cannot admit of a doubt; and if I receive your offers in an unthankful manner, pray impute it to my situation, to the strange scenes which I have lately witnessed, and which have almost stunned my faculties; impute it to my fear of going beyond my father's wishes,—to any thing but unfeeling ingratitude, of which I know myself, I have not a spark in my nature!"—"I believe it, I really believe it," said Selwyn, with warmth, "and I shall, in the absence of Mr. Hartley, constitute myself the guardian of his daughter. I will with pleasure resign my charge to him, and in the mean time I will be answerable for every thing you do in his absence."

"You do not know what you undertake, Sir," said Adriana, attempting to be lively.—"That ingenuous countenance assures me that I shall undertake nothing that I need fear," said he: "promise me, promise your guardian," taking her hand, "that you will be careful of your health, and that you will not forget that the rectory is near you; at any rate the rector will not suffer this to slip your memory. You have an active mind, young lady; and an active and well disposed mind can always find employment and amusement; and employment at your time of life, indeed at any time of life, I judge to be absolutely necessary; but I am wearying you with my company and conversation."—"No indeed, Sir!" said Adriana, emphatically; "to shew you that I value this favour as I

ought, I must entreat that you will very soon oblige me in the same way." "Provided," said he, "that you return the compliment in kind to Mrs. Selwyn." "Agreed," said Adriana; and pressing her hand with the kind affection of a father, Mr. Selwyn left the room. Neither the benevolent words nor looks of Mr. Selwyn, had had the power of drawing Adriana from the subjects which more immediately occupied her thoughts; her imagination was constantly recurring to the funeral ceremony which she had witnessed in the morning; she still heard the "rattling earth strew'd o'er the corse." Again she reverted to the look of fixed despair, depicted on the countenance of the dying Mrs. Cosby,—her agonizing shriek was yet in her ears; again she thought of her father and her

mother, soon perhaps to be prisoners in a foreign land. Why did they leave England? What cause—what dreadful unrevealed cause could tempt them to quit their country and their child?"—"*Sufficient* is it for you to hear that the event which has accelerated it, has, perhaps, coloured your future days,—that it has disgraced the name of Hartley!" These had been the fearful, the never to be forgotten words of her father. Adriana shuddered even yet, when she recalled the look of agonizing passion which accompanied their utterance.

CHAP. VII.

One day succeeded another, and by degrees our heroine became familiarized to her situation; and her spirits were tranquil, if not cheerful. Fond of the beauties of nature, of the bold and majestic, she often wandered to the summits of hills which might almost be termed mountains, guided up the steep only by the sheep-paths; but the prospect which there met her eye, fully re-

paid her for the labour of gaining the ascent. The wide expanse of ocean was before her—majestic rocks, in uncouth and fantastic shapes, broke the waves, as foaming they approached the pebbly shore; while many a white sail was distinguishable, plowing its way on the bosom of that element, which might in a moment overwhelm it. To a contemplative mind, this was an ample field for wonder and admiration; and, as the bark pursued its trackless way amidst the world of waters, various interesting conjectures, as to its destination, and its future fate, filled the breast of Adriana, till she watched it gradually vanish into obscurity; and she would unconsciously heave a sigh, as if disappointed that she could no longer watch its progress, though she

did not fail to recollect, that there was an eye who watched "those that went down to the sea in ships, and occupied their business in great waters." That this eye pervaded all space, and that the Almighty cared for all his creatures.

The gardens of the manor were large, and in their laying out, ancient stiffness still usurped the place of modern relaxation. Low box hedges, long close-mown grass walks, well kept, and nicely rolled; yew trees cut into lions, and cropped into eagles; arbours where the "lonely owl" had long reigned queen supreme; all these afforded so direct a contrast to the sublimely grand, on the tops of the cliffs, or on the sea-beach beneath, that Adriana could not fail to notice it; and the *taste of a he-*

roine must ever prefer the lofty and the wild, to that strait-lined formality for which our ancestors' gardens were so famous.

The walk to the rectory was, indeed, pleasant, but many days had elapsed ere Adriana could venture to make its inhabitants a visit—not till Mr. Selwyn had insisted on her accompanying him there, and himself introducing her to his wife. Adriana felt his kindness, and suffered him to lead her to his mansion. By the way he amused her with cheerful converse, and the benevolence and goodness of his sentiments plainly evinced to his companion, that he derived them from a pure and inexhaustible source. Adriana tried to be cheerful also, and to shew her gra-

titude for the kind interest he took in her welfare.

Unostentatious neatness reigned throughout the rectory; there was nothing deficient, yet nothing superfluous. Show was discarded for usefulness; and usefulness, under the hand of taste, wore the garb of elegant simplicity.

The traces of sickness were yet visible on the fine countenance of Mrs. Selwyn, as leading a little girl between three and four years of age in her hand, she came out to receive her guest. The introduction was quickly over, and Adriana felt as easy with Mrs. Selwyn as if she had known her all her life; her manner was like Mrs. Villers's, and

a favourable impression was instantly made on the unsophisticated heart of Adriana.

"Miss Hartley must spend the day with us, my love," said Mr. Selwyn, "and in the evening I will again be her squire; I will now leave her to your care, and will join you again before the dinner hour." Mrs. Selwyn invited Adriana to an intimacy, by that friendly confidence of manner, which is so particularly attractive in an open and benevolent character. She was an unaffected sensible woman, fit to fulfil the duties of her station, and not aiming beyond it; leaving to other females to *soar* into the *heights* of *science*, or to involve their faculties, and cloud their understandings, with theological con-

troversies. She was contented to learn her faith and her duty, as explained to her from the pulpit by her husband; and she might truly be said, "to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with her God."

The morning had passed away before Adriana imagined it was noon. Mrs. Selwyn had three children, two boys and a girl, and their smiling faces, and artless prattle, soon won the way to Adriana's heart.

Just as the dinner was going on, an elegant chariot drove up to the door. "Don't be alarmed, my dear Miss Hartley," said Mrs. Selwyn, "it is only Cecilia Oakley; she often takes us thus by surprise. I consider her as my eldest

daughter, or my younger sister. She is an heiress, to whom Mr. Selwyn is appointed guardian." At that moment Miss Oakley entered the room, handed in by the rector; he introduced her particularly to Adriana: "Let me hope, Cecilia, that you will form an intimacy with Miss Hartley—you will find your account in it."—"That I am confident I shall, Sir; for I am a physiognomist, and first impressions are not easily erased from my mind." Adriana made a courtesy to this flattering speech.

"We have not seen you for a whole week, Cecilia," said Mrs. Selwyn, as they sat down to dinner. "Where have you been?"—"Dear Madam, all the country over—to B——, to C——, to Arlingham, where there was a gay

assembly on Tuesday last.—I came home at four in the morning."--"Who was your *chaperon?*" asked Mr. Selwyn: "I must enquire into the proceedings of my ward: and surely Mrs. Hambleton was not willing to sit up till four in the morning?"—"Oh dear! no. She was at home and fast asleep hours before I returned," said Cecilia. "I went with the Pembertons."—"I wish you had gone with another party," said Mr. Selwyn, gravely. "Now, why?—my dear prim guardy, why?" said Miss Oakley, stroking the rector's face with her white hand, and showing by this action the beauty of her well-turned arm to Adriana, "now tell me why?"—"I will, after dinner," said Mr. Selwyn, "notwithstanding all your Syren blandishments."

Rather pleased than disconcerted at this answer, Cecilia went on chatting through the meal, and when it was ended, she placed her hands before her, got up from her seat, went up to Mr. Selwyn, and making a very low and solemn courtesy, she said, "Now, Sir, with all due deference, your ward is standing before you, to hear your reasons."—"Cannot you guess them, Cecilia?"—"I may guess a thousand, Sir, and not hit on the right at last."—"I suspect that is a little subterfuge, and that you are conscious the right reason was uppermost. Mrs. Pemberton is a *woman* of *the world;* she admits acquaintances very promiscuously, in hopes of establishing her daughters. She is far from correct, either in manners or conduct: there may be no essential *harm*

in her, what generally goes under that designation; but I do not approve those characters for the companions of youth, who are continually overleaping the rules of propriety, and if not entering the territories of vice, approaching its threshold too nearly."—" I never heard any harm of Mrs. Pemberton in my life," said Cecilia.—" Look at her, and tell me, do you see any *good* in her." asked Mr. Selwyn.—" She is very lively, and entertaining, and good-humoured." " In what does her liveliness consist?" asked the rector. " Is it the spontaneous and natural effusion of an unadulterated heart; or, is it in laughing and *quizzing*, as it is termed, every he or she who falls under her notice, with a defect of person, or aukwardness of manner? Entertainment of this ill-na-

tured kind is a gratification dearly gained—at the expence of feeling and humanity; and as to her good humour—to Miss Oakley, Mrs. Pemberton *may* be good humoured, it is her interest to be so; but is this equanimity and affability of temper carried with her amongst her servants, her daughters, those whom she esteems her inferiors, or those she may have under her controul?"—"Dear Sir! you are going quite beyond me now. How is it possible that I can see her where I am not? unless, indeed, you consider me endued with the properties of the *invisible lady*, about whom the world makes so much noise—really now, it is not my province to see further——"—"Than you like," interrupted Mr. Selwyn, with quickness.—"And would *you*, my good and charitable Sir, advise your Cecilia, with

severe scrutiny to find out all the dark shades in the characters of her acquaintance? What a horrid! what a fearful study!" raising her hands with affected disgust.—"Not so," said Mr. Selwyn, "you *know* not so, but you *affect* to misunderstand me; and yet you have in general a facile comprehension, quick enough to discover a hidden meaning. Mine is not obscure—I neither deal in enigmas nor in riddles."—"O pardon me there! you are talking of *one* female *to* another, and all women are riddles." "What, you allow yourself incomprehensible, though you are not invisible?" said Mrs. Selwyn.—"I allow myself *every* thing that is wrong, with the warmest wishes towards *every* thing that is *right*," said Cecilia. Mr. Selwyn took her hand and pressed it.

"But how *can* I be good," said Miss Oakley, with a half natural, half affected manner,--"how *can* I be good, when even you spoil me, and when all the world beside are telling me I am the most charming, the divinest creature in existence—how is it possible not to believe them——?"—"Especially," interrupted Mrs. Selwyn, "when you were previously disposed to be of their opinion!"

"But," said Mr Selwyn, smiling at his wife's good-humoured sarcasm, "have I not frequently bid you beware, Cecilia, and proved to you that money, let your perfections and your merits be a million times beyond what I allow them with all due deference to be,

that money will still be your attraction with the multitude; and when you consider this in your reflective moments (for I presume you still have a few of these) will not your self-love be prevented from rising to an inordinate height?"

"Ah!" said Cecilia, "these reflective moments are dangerous periods. Now, for instance, when I returned from the Arlingham assembly, where I had appeared the idol—the divinity—and had almost imagined myself a goddess, because I was addressed and looked at as one,—I say when I returned fatigued and jaded—when I sat at my toilette, and saw my eyes red as ferret's—my hair hanging like Sir Andrew Ague's cheeks in Shakspeare's

Twelfth Night—my cheeks despoiled of their roses, I discarded my fine trappings—I looked at them with contemptuous abhorrence—I almost said to the diamond tiara which had adorned my brow, 'It is *you* that are the object of rapturous admiration, not the wearer—*you* would be followed and courted—*you* would be complimented and idolized, placed on the head of idiotism, decrepitude, or insanity! and in the first moment of my splenetic fatigue, I was tempted to have placed it on an automaton, to personate Miss Oakley the next time she appeared in public."--"Cecilia, I have great hopes of you yet," said Mr. Selwyn, with unusual warmth.

"Who did you dance with at Arlingham?" asked Mrs. Selwyn. Cecilia

coloured. "Who did you dance with?" repeated the enquirer. Miss Oakley played with the orange on her plate, and looked down as she answered, "With Lord Maybury."—"Who is this Lord Maybury?" said Mrs. Selwyn, applying to her husband, and not noticing the evident confusion of Miss Oakley. "I think I have frequently heard his name within the last six weeks. He is colonel of the ——— regiment, and is quartered at Arlingham," answered Mr. Selwyn: "I dined in company with him one day at Mr. Dutton's."—"And what do you think of him?" asked Mrs. Selwyn. "Oh! it is unfair to ask *my* opinion—we must apply here—to the *physiognomist*," said her husband.

Cecilia had recovered her presence of mind, and tranquillity of countenance: "He is an excellent dancer, and a very agreeable man," said she; "he seems to have seen a great deal of the world—and Mrs. Pemberton says——" She caught Mr. Selwyn's eye and stopped. "What does Mrs. Pemberton say?" asked Mr. Selwyn, in a tone of good-humoured enquiry.—"That he is generally allowed to be a perfect gentleman in his manner——."—"A perfect man of *the world*, I believe he may be," said Mr. Selwyn, drily.—"Mrs. Pemberton is acquainted with him, is she?" said Mrs. Selwyn.—"Oh yes! I I believe they are connected, or related, or something." answered Cecilia; "they are particularly intimate"—"What is he *Irish* too?" asked Mrs. Selwyn,

turning up her lip with rather a contemptuous expression.—"I believe so," said Miss Oakley.—"I am sure of it," said Mr. Selwyn; "the title you know is Irish, and though schooled in the language of the world, his lordship cannot divest his speech and accent of the peculiar brogue of his country."—"What a disagreeble brogue it is!" said Mrs. Selwyn.—"My dear Madam, how can you think so! you would not say so again I am sure if you were to hear——."

Cecilia stopped, and coloured; she caught the eyes of Mr. Selwyn fixed on her with a peculiar sort of expression, which she well understood, and she was silent. "Well, my dear Madam," said she, after a minute's pause, assuming an air of sudden recollection, and turning to

Mrs. Selwyn, "Oakley is just completed, and I have at length issued the cards for my ball. I would not send you any thing so ceremonious, and so I came myself to tell you, that it is fixed for the twelfth of next month."—"Would not the first have done better?" asked Mr. Selwyn, "your rooms would not have been so crowded in that case, I think, because people would have been afraid that you meant to make *fools* of them, in *honour of the day*."—"You would not have come on either day?" said Cecilia, very good naturedly, turning to him.—"No, my love, you know I would not; a ball of the description which your's will be, is not at all consonant to my taste. Mrs. Selwyn will, I trust, be well enough to attend you, because I think you will want some assistance, and Mrs. Hamble-

ton does not enter much into the spirit of modern entertainments."—"No, she is more anxious about substance than spirit," said Cecilia, laughingly. "I left her this morning busily engaged in overlooking the process of curing tongues and drying beef for the occasion; you know she thinks we ought to go the cheapest way to work, and while she is calculating how to save a penny in a pound, I give indiscriminate orders for what I think I may want."

"No medium between you—but recollect, extremes are dangerous, profusion is as blameable as parsimony."--"Undoubtedly," said Miss Oakley; "but who but Mrs. Hambleton could think of economizing, and saving half a farthing on such an occasion as this? But I am

engrossing all the conversation, and Miss Hartley will think me the rudest being in the creation!"—"Not absolutely that," said Adriana, smiling; "and really I have been so much alone of late, that it is quite gratifying to me to hear the human voice."—"Mrs. Selwyn, I shall never forgive you, if you do not bring Miss Hartley in your hand on the twelfth," said Miss Oakley.—"This request must be made in *form* to *her*, I know; a visit to the manor must precede it, &c. &c.—and all this shall be done: but I have already set my heart on seeing her, so, *sans ceremonie*, I mention my wishes."—"You forget," said Adriana, "my situation: the recent death of Mrs. Cosby, the—the—uncertainty——." She stopped, and added, "It will be quite out of my power for me to wait on you."—"No, no!

it will not! it must not!" said Cecilia, interrupting her with quickness: "plead for me, Mrs. Selwyn! plead, my good guardian!"—"We shall see what is to be done," said Mr. Selwyn; "it is a long time to the twelfth of April."—"A very long time," said Cecilia, with a half sigh; "but it was impossible to prepare the house before. You have not been over since the painter came down, Sir: he has been six weeks in the house, with his two attendants, and I assure you he has worked a metamorphosis in my mansion; I will not call it Ovid's—for—I must not forestal myself."

CHAP. VIII.

MR. Selwyn, as he had promised, escorted Adriana home. As they pursued their walk, he conversed of Miss Oakley. "Understanding your wishes from your looks," said he, "I have cautioned Cecilia not to mention her having met you at the rectory to day; for my lively ward

having a general and indiscriminate acquaintance in the neighbourhood, the whole host would have besieged you, were they informed that you were visible."—"How good, how considerate!" said Adriana. Mr. Selwyn continued to speak—"The father of Cecilia Oakley," said he, "was bred to trade, and carried on, for thirty years of his life, the business of a grocer in the bustling city of Bristol: he married at the age of forty a woman in his own sphere; and eight years since, he was called from weighing sugar and figs, to receive half a plum, and the estate of Oakley, which were bequeathed to him by the will of a penurious old gentleman, to whom he was very distantly related. Mr. Oakley had but one child, a daughter; his wife had been dead some years, and he left Bristol, and

all the noise and employment of his former situation, to become an independent gentleman, and live in the country. He was a man of good principles, and had acquired the title of a fair trader. It is probable, that he never would have been a shining character, had he from his youth received the advantages of a liberal education and cultivated society. Contracted in his notions, reserved and aukward in his manners, and obstinately adhering to every prejudice which custom and habit had impressed on his mind, he was not the character to sit down easy and independent in the country; neither was he the kind of man with whom country gentlemen, independent in principles, with a good many hereditary prejudices stamped on their minds also, could associate with pleasure. Poor

Mr. Oakley soon found, that in toiling to get money, and in the full possession of it, there was a vast difference; and that in his case, the advantages were all in favour of the former. Often he wished himself standing again behind his counter, weighing sugar and figs, and up to the elbows in business, as he passed a long wet day at Oakley, stirring the fire, looking out of the window, or in playing with the parrot, which had been transplanted with its master from the shop to the country.

"Destitute of resources, with no taste for any intellectual or refined amusement, with neither spirit nor courage to undertake those manly sports in which his neighbours indulged, perhaps a more pitiable situation could not be met with,

perhaps a greater blank could not be drawn in the whole lottery of life, though, in the eyes of common observers, he had appeared to have drawn a *capital prize.*

" Cecilia Oakley was put to the best seminary for female education at Bristol. On the death of her mother, a widowed sister of her father, of the name of Hambleton (who had married a manufacturer of muslins at Glasgow, and who losing her husband had been reduced to a state of indigence), had been sent for to superintend the house of the grocer, and was afterwards removed to Oakley with the rest of the family. The rigid notions of economy and strict frugality had been impressed on the mind of Mrs. Hambleton, by situation and circumstances: the utmost meed of praise to which she had

ever aspired, was the term 'good housewife;' and in pickling, preserving, and recipes for cookery, I believe her equal is not to be found in all the country round.

"About two years since, Mr. Oakley rendered up his joyless existence: he constituted me the guardian of his daughter's fortune, till she attained the age of one and twenty. I have, as I have told you, just resigned my office. Mrs. Hambleton, by Mr. Oakley's will, is to live with her niece till she marries, and then his orders are, that she is to be paid fifty pounds yearly for her life. You stare! and so did Cecilia, at the smallness of a bequest, the only deduction from a fortune of at least three thousand a year.—The generous heiress will, of course, make

a great addition to it; but Mr. Oakley saw and knew the disposition of his sister, and she will, 'in making both ends meet,' and living on his bequest with the exactest frugality, be more happy than with an addition to her income: but this I shall not say to Cecilia, whose liberal intentions in Mrs. Hambleton's favour, are what duty and principle authorize. You find I am very communicative, but as you will probably see a good deal of Miss Oakley, I would wish you to receive a just impression of her character, and in consequence, make allowances for all that your discernment may discover blameable in it."

"Oh! Sir," said Adriana, blushing, "it is not for me to discover faults, I that am so weak, so erring—it is not for

me——".—" It is for no being on earth," said Mr. Selwyn, " to discover them insidiously, to drag them to the eye of day, in order to confuse, or overwhelm the unfortunate possessor; but where discrimination and judgment exist in the human mind, it must, it will see the failings and the eccentricities of those with whom it associates; and though a humane and religious person will not publish them to the world, yet they must be still apparent to him; he cannot shut the eyes of his understanding, though he may generously affix the padlock of secrecy on his lips."—But I will proceed in my little sketch of Cecilia.

" You may perceive, that from he parents she inherited very few advantages, but from nature she inherits a

good disposition, great vivacity, and certainly an understanding rather above than below mediocrity; yet all these have been clouded and biassed by the *love of money*. Mistake me not, I do not mean that avaricious devotion to it, which is the received meaning of the term, though myward's devotion to it is not to be doubted."—"I do not comprehend you, Sir!" said Adriana, looking for an explanation up to the face of the rector.—"I will explain myself," said he. "Having told you the unwearied diligence with which Mr. Oakley pursued the acquisition of riches, and informed you of the chance by which he arrived at the possession of a large property, and all the goods, and all the luxuries which could be bought in this mortal life, you may easily suppose that the imagination of a young girl was

dazzled by exterior trappings, and that the value of golden ore, which could procure so many fine things, did not fail to strike her.

"The seminary which had been fixed on for her education, was a most improper one: in such a situation I would have placed the proud and poor daughter of some titled man, who had been tutored to look down with contempt on all the phlebeian orders of society, because the daughters of wealthy tradesmen and merchants would have afforded such a girl a lesson, which might have improved her manners, if not her heart; but for Cecilia Oakley, the intercourse with such girls was not to be wished: there her fortune was continually sounded in her ears; there her finery, her cloaths, her

trinkets, were daily admired; and there she learned, that the applause and the approbation of the world could easily be purchased at the expence of a little of that money, of which she should have so much.

"Is it to be wondered then, that she neglected her studies, and sought not to improve her mind, when she found that she could bribe the world to say, that she was already arrived at the summit of perfection! and can you wonder if now, in the actual possession of an overflowing fortune, she runs into a thousand extravagancies, and fancies that she has a right to do what she pleases? Susceptible to the tongue of flattery, fond of admiration, and dazzled by the exterior, I tremble lest herself and her fortune should

fall the prey of an unprincipled and artful libertine.

"At present, she confines herself at Oakley; if that can be called confinement, which admits of her scouring the country with four horses, in every possible direction, for above twenty miles round; for her wealth and her good nature, (I might have put the latter word first, only that I know the world so well) make her welcomely received wherever she appears.

"As soon as I saw you, as soon as I witnessed the calm and collected manner in which you conducted yourself, as far removed from affectation on the one hand, as from levity on the other, I resolved to interest you for my ward, and, if possi-

ble, to bring about a friendly intercourse between you: chance has this day befriended me; though being well aware of the aukwardness of your present situation, and remarking that delicacy of feeling which keeps you constantly alive to it, I hinted to Miss Oakley that she would oblige me in not mentioning her having seen you, and also, that at present it would perhaps be as well to see you only at the rectory."

"You are very good, and very friendly, Sir," said Adriana, "I cannot thank you as I ought: when my papa and mamma return, I hope, they——." She stopped, for she recollected that the feelings of her parents did not always seem in unison with her's—she sighed. The

rector responsively echoed her sigh, and being arrived at the door of the manor, he pressed her hand, and wishing her a good night, left her.

CHAP. IX.

During the succeeding month, the time of our heroine was passed in pursuing her amusements and studies at the manor, and in frequent visits at the rectory. The society of Mr. and Mrs. Selwyn became daily more pleasing to her. Instruction and cheerfulness were always to be found with them;

and, on the part of this worthy couple, she was beheld at every succeeding interview with added interest. The lively Cecilia, when she had no better engagement, (or rather, when she had no other means of killing time) formed one of the groupe, and her gaiety and rattle varied the scene amusingly to Adriana, who was not naturally formed for "melancholy musings."

At length the anticipated, though yet dreaded intelligence arrived,—the war with France had again broken out. The English in that country were detained as prisoners: and Adriana suffered under acute misery for several days, at the idea of a long protracted separation from her parents; a separation unbroken by the consoling circumstance

of a letter, or a single syllable of information concerning them.

The fear of cruelties, of hardships, which they might be doomed to undergo in a foreign land, and in the power of a vaunting and stern oppressor, affixed a sharp sting in her heart; and all the reasonings and kind consolations of Mr. and Mrs. Selwyn, were required to bring her to any sort of composure.

These excellent friends were not backward in administering comfort, and the grateful Adriana soon loved them with an affection which might almost be denominated filial. Martha was doubly attentive and watchful on this addition of anxiety to her young lady;

and Ezekiel, lifting up his hands and eyes, and showing nothing but the whites of the latter, frequently declared that France was the land of abominations, and that he had heard it proved that Apollyon was there loosed from the bottomless pit, and that he had only changed his name to Napoleon!

A good constitution, and a natural elasticity of mind, enabled our heroine gradually to lift up her head; and feeling that neither her walks, nor the beauties of nature, had the power wholly to divert, she endeavoured, by making herself useful, to derive a stronger interest in existence; and by visiting the poor cottagers, the objects of her late grandmother's bounty, by enquiring into their domestic concerns, and as-

sisting them in making raiment for their children, she felt the conscious satisfaction of her usefulness in society.

Scrupulously economical with regard to her own dress, she had money enough in her purse, by which she could be serviceable in a hundred little ways to those around her. In caudles, in broths, and diet drinks, old Martha excelled all the neighbourhood, (for Mrs. Hambleton, though a complete housewife, confined her culinary art to her niece's mansion, and did not let her poorer neighbours reap the benefit of her skill), and in Adriana's benevolent zeal for the invalid villagers, she went hand in hand, and was delighted when her young mistress stood

at her side in the house-keeper's room, overlooking the progress of the "kitchen physic," as she termed it.

The supplies of the table were furnished by the house-steward, who had lived in that capacity with Mrs. Cosby's father. No retrenchments or regulations had taken place at her death, every thing had gone on as usual; and a large farm being in hand, of which this man, Mr. Wellclose, had the management, he contrived (not like modern agriculturists and speculatists, but like an old practical farmer, who had the interest of his employers at heart,) to supply the table, and almost to maintain the house with the profits, and on the produce of it.

Wellclose had frequently offered Adriana money, but she had no occasion for it. Her mourning habiliments offered no excuse for her indulging in the vanity of dress, had she been so inclined. An old harpsichord which had belonged to her mother, was brought down from the large lumber-room, to which for years it had been consigned; and being cleaned, and new stringed, was capable of assisting her practice. The library had been ransacked, and she had found in it a number of our best historians, poets, and divines; her favourites in each of these had been brought, with the harpsichord and her drawing implements, into the small oak parlour; which having a sash window that opened into

a flower-garden, and being near the housekeeper's room, she had fixed on as her sitting-apartment, and which now began to wear the appearance of a residence.

"A comfortable residence!" would Adriana frequently whisper, as she sat at her avocations. "Ah! how do I know that my dear parents are so well off? Ah! what would I not give to see them at this moment sitting on either side of me?"

It was generally useless after this reflection to attempt to draw, to work, or to play any more; a walk to her favourite solitary cliff would not do after such a soliloquy; only a visit to

the rectory, or an errand of mercy to some sick tenant of a cottage.

Mrs. Selwyn very much wished to be accompanied by Adriana to Oakley on the night of the heiress's grand ball and supper. Adriana, at first, strenuously refused; but all her objections were overruled as speedily as made, by her friend. "I own," said Adriana, blushingly, "that a ball is not without its attractions to me."—"At your age, I should wonder if it should," said Mr. Selwyn, good-humouredly. "*The merry dance I dearly love*," continued Adriana, "but a light step, and a heavy heart, are as music without harmony.—And when I think of those who are at this moment prisoners in——" "You *must* not think of them, my dear Miss Hartley; and if your parents should

either of them be at Verdun, where I have lately read most of the prisoners of consequence have been sent, they have their balls too; for I yesterday saw in the Star, an account of a very splendid one given by Mrs. —— to the English detained with her at that place."

"Can prisoners in a foreign country have the heart to dance?"—"Why not?" asked Mr. Selwyn: "they imbibe, perhaps, the manners, while they inhale the atmosphere of that 'gay sprightly land of mirth and social ease.' The English who are detained, not as prisoners, not as *captives*, we may say, are merely detained for a time, and are suffered to frisk about, and to spend their money on their parole of honour.—Remember, they went over to behold

the splendour of modern France, and to share in its amusements; and if they are detained a little longer than they wish, that is a *double* reason why they should amuse themselves a little longer." "Ah, Sir! although you talk thus, I *know* that you are talking sarcastically, and that *you think* the English should not have gone over so rapidly to that land, where they are compelled to stay."—"I really *do* think," answered Mr. Selwyn, "that most of those who are detained are well served for their pains; and that in the records of the English history, it will be an eternal stain on the sterling character of our nation; and exhibit it in a most ridiculous point of view, (to say no worse of it) when it is seen, that a hasty peace was no sooner concluded, than, from the high-

est to the lowest, the British nation was on the move; and the strand of Dover was covered with the shoals which passed over daily, under the shallow pretext of curiosity, to view those monuments of genius, and those spoils of art, which have been dragged from the scenes of their primeval splendour, to gratify the overweening ambition and pride of a self-constituted tyrant.—But the real motive, perhaps, has been, to witness, and to share in spectacles and feasts of voluptuous intemperance, which Rome, even in her fall, would have blushed to have thought of."

Mr. Selwyn paused.—His wife again reverted to the ball, and Adriana ingenuously confessed, that great part of her unwillingness to go, proceeded from

the idea of appearing before the assembled neighbourhood as Miss Hartley, "and of course," added she, "as such, an object of curiosity.—Mrs Cosby's death on the night of my arrival at the manor,—my parents so suddenly leaving England—the cause unexplained—these circumstances will draw on me the eye of enquiry, and—I feel, my dear Madam, that I am not equal to it; for, unused to the world, and living so much alone as I have of late, and having felt so much anxiety—I believe I am grown quite nervous," continued she, sighing, "for I shrink at the very idea!"—"We are prepared for this, also," said Mrs. Selwyn, smiling triumphantly. Cecilia has never mentioned her knowledge of you: many strangers will appear at Oakley—I shall introduce *Miss*

Adrian as a friend of mine."—"And does Mr. Selwyn approve this deception?" asked Adriana doubtingly, yet expectingly looking up for his answer. "I can scarcely call this a deception, my dear," said he, "as Cecilia knows you for what you are.—May none of her guests on that evening wear a more questionable appearance!"—"Amen!" said Mrs. Selwyn: "and so, Miss Adrian, we have now fixed our plan, and I hope we shall meet on Tuesday to execute it," added Mrs. Selwyn, shaking the hand of Adriana as she quitted her.

CHAP. X.

As had been previously agreed, Adriana walked over to the rectory. As she left the manor, Martha followed her to the door to wish her much pleasure; and as Ezekiel held it in his hand to let her out, he said, "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting."—"Sometimes,"

replied Adriana, who felt her spirits light; "but recollect, good Ezekiel, that the same wise man has said, 'There is a time for all things." Ezekiel bowed solemnly, but said no more; and our heroine tripped to the rectory.

The business of the toilette was soon adjusted. The auburn tresses of Adriana were tastefully bound round her head, and fastened on the crown with a plain comb of tortoise-shell; a black robe set off the brilliant hue of her complexion, and she stood an illustration of the beautiful, but hackneyed lines of Thomson—

"Loveliness needs not the foreign aid of ornament,
"But is, when unadorn'd, adorn'd the most."

The matron graces of Mrs. Selwyn were veiled in the garb of modesty. A turban of fine muslin was folded round her head, a dove-coloured sarcenet robe enveloped her person. She knew her situation in life, and it was her ambition to keep in it. No pearls or diamonds, no beads or bugles were requisite in her decorations —no bare *back*, or *front*, or *arms* were suffered to exhibit themselves; but the delicate reserve and propriety of her manners, were in unison with the chaste simplicity of her dress. Thus arrayed, a chaise conveyed our two ladies to Oakley: they went at an early hour in the evening, in order to precede the rest of the company.

Every order of architecture had been blended and violated in the structure

and the alterations which this mansion had undergone from time to time. The heiress had not attempted a *radical* alteration, she had only been beautifying. The hall, *formerly* of black oak—in her *father's* time, yellow stuccoed, and ornamented with prints of the principal mercantile cities in Europe—had *now* been papered, and painted in panels, in pillars, and entablatures, in imitation of every sort of marble: a painted floor-cloth *à l'Egyptienne.*

Three brazen sphinxes' heads protruded from the centre of the ceiling; each "grinned horribly a ghastly smile," for the purpose of letting three rings issue from their respective mouths, which three rings were again encircled by a bronze ring of immense size, which

supported a beautifully cut glass lamp, *costume à l'Egyptienne*, which a country-bred lackey, mounted on a high flight of steps, was vainly endeavouring to light as our ladies entered the house.

A wide and spacious stair-case, illuminated on each side by coloured lamps, the windows filled with transparencies, representing "The Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland by moonlight," led to the drawing-room, (for this night the ball-room.) The *Graces* were painted on the ceiling—the Muses were in niches round the room: the spaces between these plaintive and sprightly lasses were filled with vases of flowers, orange-trees, and variegated lamps. Tripods were placed in the corners of the room, sup-

porting *Etruscan* urns, formed of Derbyshire petrifactions, hollowed, and illumined by wax tapers from within.

Cupid lay in ambush on the floor, encircled by wreaths of roses and aramanthine bowers. The artist had exerted his skill in *chalking* out the sportive deity; and "the light fantastic toe" would probably obliterate all vestiges of his godship before morning. Ottoman couches of rose-coloured Persian, trimmed with silver fringe, and supported by bronze serpents, were placed round the room instead of chairs. The windows were decorated with the same materials, and the light and elegant taste with which the drapery was folded, gave evidence that the hand of the *moderns* had been engaged, and blended

with an imitation of the works of the ancients. A superb mirror at the top and the bottom of the room, reflected the prismatic hues of the many coloured lamps, and the crystal brightness of the lustres which supported the wax lights*.

* The authoress is aware that she has forestalled *Fashion* in her description of *Oakley*, according to the period in which she has laid her history. But she likewise is *fully* aware, that no description can interest a *modern* reader, unless it be according to the mode. Yet how difficult is it to "catch the rainbow e're it fall." For before this work is printed, in all probability, Egypt may have yielded to *Tartary*, and the *costume* of the *hordes* may be adopted by all our belles; so that it may become more *common* than heretofore, for a gentleman "to catch a Tartar" in the companion he has chosen for life. A bad pun is a bad thing,---or else we should say, lucky if the lady does not prove herself from the country of *Crim* Tartary!

Dazzled for a moment by the scene of pageantry before her, Adriana threw her eyes hastily round her; but from inanimate, they soon fixed on an animated object, as a short thick personage made her appearance, to whom she was immediately introduced by Mrs. Selwyn as Miss Adrian, and whom she found to be the aunt of Miss Oakley.

Mrs. Hambleton had a good set of fat course features, enlivened by a pair of acute black eyes, and a settled red in her cheeks. Her hair was drawn up over a high cushion, and so tightly was it kept in this position, that the skin of her broad and wide expanse of forehead was absolutely raised from its place; but long established usage had so loosened it, that the old lady did

not feel any thing unpleasant attending it. A very small cap, placed at the back of the head, composed of figured gauze, and trimmed with blond lace, and surrounded by a wide puffing of cherry-coloured riband, completed the head-dress. A large row of blue beads enveloped her throat. Her gown was a yellow silk damask, cut of a walking length, and spread over a pocket-hoop. Stay-hooks of embossed silver, were placed at the bottom of her long waist, and sustained, (or were to sustain) her muslin apron, which, folded up, Mrs. Hambleton held in her hand as she entered the room, having pinned a Scotch plaid pocket-handkerchief before her stomacher, *to keep herself clean* till the company arrived. Gauze ruffles shrouded her elbows, which had never

seen the eye of day. The high French heels of her shoes (brocaded with silk and gold) were to be conspicuously observed from under her gown behind, while her stone buckles sparkled in the front of her foot.

"How d'ye do, Mrs. Selwyn? How d'ye do, Miss?—I am very happy to see you, and take it very kind that you are come so early. Cicey is not drest yet. Excuse my carrying my apron in my hand, but I think 'tis a pity to rumple it before the company begins to come in. Law bless us! what a room here is! I don't know what this world will come to—not I—who should think of having *snakes*, and *vipers*, and *long cripples*, and dark lamps in drawing rooms!—and this naked blind boy too

on the floor!—but Cicey will have it all her own way, and calls him *cubit*.

"Miss Oakley likes to modernize a little, and to do things dashingly, to astonish her country neighbours.—What shall we say?—that she can afford it, and that she will never be younger?" "Why that's true enough, Mrs. Selwyn," said Mrs. Hambleton, "for you may be sure this ball is *all* her doing—she did not ask *my* leave."—"She took it," said Mrs. Selwyn, smiling.—"Yes, Ma'am, but if she had *took* my advice, it would have been better. Here she has had painters and people down from London, weeks and weeks, and I could not, for the life of me, persuade her to make them take her work by the job. —No, no, to be sure, she must have

it her own way: and here they've been in the house, eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and costing Cicey more than their heads are worth. 'Tis throwing money away, Mrs. Selwyn.—Why there are them pictures up there—see them at the top," looking towards the Muses, "one, two, three—yes, you see, *only* nine of 'em—I wanted the man to make out the *dozen* when Cicey paid his bill, and to throw in the other three over and above, but Cicey was quite angry, and the impudent *imposing* fellow laughed outright in my face; but I'll be judged by any body, if *twelve* does not seem a more regular set; and there wouldn't have been all them baskets of flowers been wanting then neither. —I have been bustling about all day, Mrs. Selwyn, till I'm quite tir'd——but

law bless us! where's the use of *my* trying to save, when others think of nothing else but squanderation!"

"You had better sit down now, Ma'am, and rest yourself."—"Oh bless us, I can't stay one minute—I hav'nt taken out the wine—and I know better, Mrs. Selwyn, than to trust the key of Cicey's wine-cellar with any butler, especially at such a time as this; for there'll be junketting in kitchen as well as parlour such a night as this, I'll warrant: for," turning again towards Mrs. Selwyn, and lowering her voice, "a couple of fiddles would'nt satisfy Miss Cicey, forsooth, but she must have tamborines, and flutes, and a whole band of music; and the muscianers they will be here all night.—But, Mrs. Selwyn, remember,

you must help Cicey to receive the company—here'll be I don't know who, for I don't know none of 'em, except one or two, and I shall have enough to do in seeing that the house is not set on fire—and ten chances to one that it is'nt. Oh!" lifting up her hands and eyes, "if poor dear brother could have lived to see this day!—But hush! hush! for here's Cicey a-coming."

Miss Oakley tripped gaily into the room, singing, "Fly away, time!" She advanced towards Mrs. Selwyn and Adriana, and seizing a hand of each, expressed her pleasure at seeing them.

"You have remembered my request, and I am extremely obliged to you, dearest Madam," said she, "for appear-

ing so early, to help me to courtesy to and smile as the company make their *entrée!*"—"And do you remember *mine*," said Mrs. Selwyn, "and that this lady is to be Miss Adrian for the night."—"O yes! I will recollect it all——but let me see—what a pity that here are no glass slippers for our Cinderella; for of course some *great nobleman* will fall *desperately in* love with her, and unless she drops her glass slipper, he can have no clue by which to find his fair incognito. You remember, Miss Adrian, the love-lorn swain *ought* to be a prince, but as we shall have none of that high rank, we must be content with a——"—"Princess," interrupted Adriana, "who reigns supreme in this enchanted palace!" "Very prettily said," returned Miss Oakley, casting a look of triumphant

pleasure round her illuminated apartment. "But, now say the truth, and do not flatter—do you approve my decorations?"—"It is impossible not to be charmed with them," answered Adriana.—"Well I am willing to believe you—I have spared no expence to gratify my whims."—"So I perceive," said Mrs. Selwyn, looking archly at the speaker, "and so Mrs. Hambleton will tell you, Madam."—"I dare say," said Miss Oakley. "But what is the use of money, unless one can enjoy it, and lay it out as one likes?"—"Certainly of no use; but there are different methods of enjoyment, and different methods of laying it out," returned Mrs. Selwyn. "Thank you, Madam, for the quotation—a leaf out of my good guardy's *last most* excellent sermon on charity,

preached for the benefit of Sunday schools!"—"I am glad you remember it," said Mrs. Selwyn, answering her in the same good-humoured tone of raillery.

CHAP. XI.

BEFORE nine, the ball-room was well crouded with company, all strangers to our heroine. The various dresses and the different countenances engrossed her attention. She was not particularly introduced to any one, and though Mrs. Selwyn contrived that she should not be neglected, and her fair hostess was very attentive, and had always an agreeable *nothing* to say when she came near her, yet she had ample

room for indulging her reflections, and making her private remarks on the company as they were assembling. Mrs. Pemberton and her two daughters entered with Lord Maybury; Adriana remembered the names of this group, and her curiosity was raised as she heard them announced. Mrs. Pemberton was a fine showy woman; her manners were boldly fashionable: she advanced to Miss Oakley, and with an air and in a tone of affectionate familiarity, seized both her hands, saying, "My dear creature, such an Elysium as you have transported us to, I never yet beheld! See, see! my Lord, did you ever behold any thing so beautiful as the *coup-d'œil* of this room! I am quite enchanted! what taste, what elegance are here displayed!" This rapid effusion of approbation was addressed

to Lord Maybury, but intended for Miss Oakley.

"Ah!" said Lord Maybury, shaking his head, "what does it all prove, Mrs. Pemberton, but that this enchantress, this Armida defies all mortal power! She exalts the Graces and the Muses," turning his eyes upwards, "while the poor blind urchin is trampled under foot: and is it thus," said he, in a lower tone of voice, "that you mean to treat all those who feel and own his power?"—"Should I not treat them as they deserve?" asked Cecilia.—"And is it then a fault to feel the power of love?" asked Lord Maybury: "who then in this magic circle can escape?—For myself, I plead guilty!" bowing his head, and laying his hand upon his heart.—"And I condemn you

without judge or jury," said Cecilia. "*You* be my *judge*, I ask no jury," said his lordship, "for sure mercy dwells in that bosom." Lord Maybury's voice sunk yet lower as he concluded this sentence. Cecilia tried to laugh as she turned away towards the Miss Pembertons, but Adriana saw the colour mount into her cheeks, and suffuse her neck and face.

The Pembertons were tall girls, who had called forth all their charms for this evening's display, and who, trained under the auspices of their mother, had stepped into the world armed with "many a wanton beck, and wreathed smile," aimed at the hearts and the purses of every male in the room. Mrs. Pemberton entered into conversation with Mrs. Selwyn,

and broke out into an animated eulogium on Miss Oakley. "Such a lovely creature," said she, "and such bewitching manners, I never met with before; my girls are quite enchanted with her!" "Miss Oakley is very charming," echoed each of the young ladies, smiling, and displaying their teeth. "Miss Oakley opens the ball herself, of course?" said Mrs. Pemberton.—"Yes, I fancy she does," replied Mrs. Selwyn.—"Are you engaged, Maria? are you engaged, Henrietta?" asked Mrs. Pemberton, touch-her daughters' elbows as an elegant young man was passing.

"No, mamma!"—"No, mamma!" Mrs. Pemberton added, in a louder key, "Yes, the partners are to be changed every two dances!"—It would not do; the young

man passed the trio with a slight bow. "I don't know what can ail him to-night," said Mrs. Pemberton, while Maria played with her fan, and Henrietta, looking down, picked a rose, which had been stuck in her bosom, to pieces.

Again Mrs. Pemberton began to expatiate to Mrs. Selwyn on the agreeable qualities of Miss Oakley; again she touched her daughters, who raised their heads, and simpered and smiled, as a red coat, of no mean appearance, was coming towards them; but he merely noticed them *en passant*. "I don't know what is the matter with the men to-night—you neither of you take, Maria or Henrietta—you really don't take to-night, and yet you both look very well too; but do, Maria, pull that curl a little more over

your left eye, to give you that roguish look which Maybury so much admires,—there, that's it." Mrs. Hambleton at that moment accosted Mrs. Pemberton, who knowing her relationship to Miss Oakley, thought it incumbent to bestow on her very particular attention.

"A delightful room this, Ma'am, and most exquisitely fitted up."—"Yes," answered the old lady, "I believe it may, but it has been a long time preparing, and pains, and trouble, and money it has cost."—"To be sure, no doubt of it," said Mrs. Pemberton; "but where taste and judgment——"—"Oh! Ma'am, I know nothing of taste, and as to judgment, mine was seldom called upon; I try to set things a little in order, and a little after the rate, and so on——Oh!

bless us all, if there an't a thief in that candle over there, in one of them glass candlesticks: I told George to bring snuffers, but the deuce a one do I see all round the room! Now, Mrs. Selwyn," turning towards that lady, in a loud whisper, "now, I persuaded Cicey to put moulds in them there glass ones at the top—now would it ever have been seen?—but she wouldn't hear me."

"Tallow candles are seldom used in such a room as this, I should think," said Mrs. Selwyn.—"'Twould never have been found out, of that I am very sure," said Mrs. Hambleton: this was spoken frumpishly.—"Not till to-morrow morning, perhaps, when these elegant Persian covers might have betrayed evident marks of contiguous tallow," said Mrs. Selwyn.

"Elegant Persian!" repeated Mrs. Hambleton, contemptuously: "if Cicey had had brocade, I would have said something to it, for then there might have been a chance of its lasting *one* seven years; but now things an't made to last as they did formerly. Look ye here, Mrs. Selwyn, this damask on my back has been in wear for five and forty years; but things are made so bad now, the very richest silks as are wove have no stiffening in 'em, nor make no rustling. Cicey laughs at me when I talk of brocades—well, well, say nothing about it, for here she's a-coming!" and off the old lady tripped, to *mind the candles*, as she said.

The band had struck up their notes of lively music; the heart of Adriana bound-

ed responsively; the scene before her could not fail of pleasing her young and innocent fancy. She had never beheld any thing like it, nor ever been at a ball, except at the annual exhibition of Mrs. Villers's pupils.

"This gentleman is desirous of obtaining the honour of your fair hand for the ensuing two dances," said Miss Oakley, addressing Adriana, and leading towards her a man of graceful figure and agreeable countenance, who seemed to have passed the very heyday of youth; he was announced to her as Mr. Falkland, she to him as Miss Adrian. Adriana blushingly, yet not confused, received this introduction, and suffered herself to be led off to join the merry group. Mrs. Pemberton smiled, yet bit her lip, as she

witnessed this introduction, evidently mortified that it had not been made to one of her own daughters; but as the couple walked away, she said to Mrs. Selwyn, "Don't you think it is vastly ridiculous to see such a disparity as that? I should think it is time for old Falkland to leave off dancing, and to let your amiable young friend have the chance of getting a partner more capable of entertaining her; to be sure such an Ash-Wednesday face as Falkland carries about with him, is not very suitable to a scene like this!"

"I doubt if there be a man in the whole room more likely to entertain my friend, than Mr. Falkland," said Mrs. Selwyn; "his conversation, when he is in spirits, is particularly pleasant, and of

course, it is likely that he would convene his whole stock to carry him through this evening: few people have such a lively fund of thought, or a more happy method of expressing it."—"Is he not thought very satirical?" asked Maria Pemberton.—"O yes! I am afraid of my life of him," answered her sister—"I was quite delighted that he did not ask me to dance."—"Oh lud! and so was I!" rejoined her sister.

"As to satire, I hardly know how to answer that," said Mrs. Selwyn, not appearing to notice what was last said by the young ladies; "he has a reflective turn of mind, and great penetration: exempt from the little follies of a trifling world himself, it is hard to witness them in silence: his severity is the voice of

truth; censure must be merited ere he adopts its language!"—"You are intimate with him?" asked Mrs. Pemberton. "Mr. Selwyn has that honour. After sequestering himself at the Hill for two months at a time, even our rectory has the appearance of bustle to Mr. Falkland; and therefore, I say that Mr. Selwyn has that honour, for he does not come to us as frequently as we could wish. But there is nothing misanthropic in his disposition or manners; he has great sensibility, and has had it tried, I believe, in his journey through life; but so much do I honour and respect him, that I am quite delighted when I see him in company, and entering with spirit, and partaking with hilarity, the amusements of young people: and I hope he will continue to dance for twenty years, for I am sure a more in-

nocent heart comes not into the merry group."

"Twenty years! bless ye, Mrs. Selwyn, why, I believe, he is fifty now!" said Maria Pemberton.—"Why not frisk beneath the burden of fourscore?" asked her sister, looking round to see if any one remarked her à-propos quotation." "I think Mr. Falkland may have nearly reached forty," said Mrs. Selwyn, after pausing a moment.

A young ensign now making grimaces before the Pembertons, the eldest Miss walked away with him to the set; and the son of a country squire coming up to Henrietta, she also was engaged, overlooking the rusticity of his manner, and his tall awkward gait, when she recollect-

ed that he was undoubted heir to five or six thousand a year. Some young ladies, educated in the *beau monde*, would have been at a loss to have understood the address of this country boor.

"Well, Miss Hemy, how d'ye do? how d'ye do? Are you for this shaking bout? if you be, I'll stretch a leg with you.'—"Oh, yes! Henrietta will dance with you, Mr. Dawson," said the mother.—"With great pleasure, Sir," said the daughter. Mrs. Selwyn had gone to another part of the room, to pay attention to the lookers-on, as Miss Oakley was arranging the order of the dance.

CHAP. XII.

The heiress began the dance—she called, "Off she goes!" and opened the ball with great spirit, her partner Lord Maybury. Adriana stood near her. She had been led towards the top by Mr. Falkland. Adriana, with great modesty, had desired to go further down, but Falkland said he acted by the authority of the mistress of the mansion, whose laws were that night

to be obeyed implicitly. "Had seniority taken the lead," said he, "*I* should most assuredly have opened the ball to night, but fortunately I was not placed in so very conspicuous a situation; as it is, I draw the eyes of half the room upon me, who are laughing at such an old fellow attempting to dance, and are envying him his partner at the same moment."—"Are you old? I did not think you were old," said Adriana, unconsciously putting her thoughts into words, and looking at Mr. Falkland with the utmost *naiveté* of manner; but recollecting that what she had said must have appeared rather singular, and seeing that he looked at her with a degree of curiosity, she hastily dropped her eyes, and said confusedly, "That is—I did not know—I did not think—"

"You are right," said Falkland laughing; "you did not think about me—which proves, perhaps, exactly that which you were trying to disprove.—Now Lord Maybury for instance—what do you *think* of him?—Is *he* young or old?" This was asked with some archness.—"There is no occasion for *me* to think of him," said Adriana humorously, "for he appears to *think enough* of himself.—There is a *young* man!" said she, glancing at Dawson. "*Very young*, indeed," said Mr. Falkland, "and if youth and folly are synonymous, not likely to grow older."—"That is indirectly saying, that wisdom and age are synonymous," said Adriana.—"I now prove the fallacy of this assertion, perhaps," said Falkland, as they began the dance.

Adriana was, as Mrs. Selwyn had predicted, much pleased with her partner. At the end of the two dances, he took a seat by her, and engaged her in conversation. She felt herself perfectly easy with him, and talked to him as freely as she would have done to Mr. Selwyn; though as the tone of her spirits was raised a little higher than usual by the associations of ideas which this brilliant assembly brought to her fancy, and the liveliness of Mr. Falkland was more playful than that of the rector, she perhaps conversed more, and with greater spirit, than she had ever done, and much more then she had imagined she could have done, to an utter stranger.

. . . . .

Mr. Falkland talked to her of Devon-

shire, as if he imagined her wholly unacquainted with the country. He asked her no direct questions, yet Adriana perceived that he wanted to be informed from what part of the world she came: she parried these inuendos, and carelessly answered, that Mrs. Selwyn had introduced her to that night's gaiety. He hastily fixed his eyes on her countenance with anxious solicitude; he ruminated for a few moments as if in deep meditation, a deep sigh issued from his bosom, and seeing Lord Maybury advancing, he rose, and walked to another part of the room.

Lord Maybury asked Adriana's hand for the two following dances; she did not refuse, though she did not feel

pleased at the change. His lordship fixed his eyes on her face with an expression, which though she did not understand, yet made her feel abashed and timid. His conversation was gallant and polished, but she was not used to the kind of style which he adopted. Many of his phrases, though perfectly the *thing*, and the very height of fashion, were quite unintelligible to her; and she who had laughed, talked, and chatted with the most perfect *nonchalance* to Mr. Falkland, felt herself braced up into the very form of stiffness and constraint by his lordship: not a lively sally issued from her lips; he scarcely got any thing from her but monosyllables and negatives; and after having extorted about a dozen of these, his lordship contented himself with lounging

down the dance in an easy careless manner, which he judged to be truly *noble.*

Poor Dawson observed this. He had been viewing him at a distance, and in silence, for some time. He had marked the spirit with which he had gone down the dance with Miss Oakley; and in humble conformity, he had galloped about poor Henrietta Pemberton, and pulled her arms till they were sore, and had given his neighbours many kicks in their shins: but now seeing the alteration in his lordship's movements, he broke out, "Look, look, Miss Maria!" for the elder sister was his present partner, "we are all in the wrong again. The lord is as quiet now!—why you can hardly see him move about, and

just now he danced liked a lion rampant." "It is not always the fashion to dance one's best," said a young red-coat, who stood at his side.—"Then I won't dance *mine* now," said Dawson.—"And did you before?" asked the officer drily. "To be sure I did," said he, "didn't you see me?"—"Now then be couchant, instead of rampant," said Maria Pemberton: "you see his lordship is tamed, and spare me, my dear Mr. Dawson!" "Dear Mr. *Bruin!*" said the military beau, turning again to his own partner Henrietta, "for he sets off exactly like a dancing bear." Dawson, in endeavouring to lounge, waved his heavy body from side to side, and waved about, till making an unfortunate slip, he lost his equilibrium, and fell prostrate at the feet of his partner, filling-up the va-

cancy between the couples which was meant to exhibit his dancing. At length drawing up his "monstrous length," with the assistance of the good-humoured ensign (Cranfield), he was again raised to his situation; but the general laugh was heightened by his saying, "I've not only danced the worst, but I've had the worst of it.—Beg pardon, Miss Maria Pemberton—I'll dance my own way for the future." How then was the young lady surprised, when, as she expected him to perform "right and left" in the figure, he stood bolt upright, and said, "you must excuse me there, Miss, for I never could do right and left in my life!"—"*Right* I should imagine he *could* not," said Cranfield, almost bursting with laughter, as he observed the desponding coun-

tenance of Miss Pemberton, who walking to her seat, left her partner abruptly, saying, "Then it is of no use for me to stand here, and make a fool of myself—I can't dance it alone."—"I am sorry," said Dawson, following her, "indeed, Miss Maria, I am very sorry, but I *never* could dance it. Father set me up with my cousin Nancy Watson, and godmother, and *his*-self, last night, that I might try to learn it against to-night, but 'twas all one—it makes my head go *roundy, roundy*, and I turn sick, and then how can I learn it?" "Oh! don't mention it! pray don't mention it!—'tis of no consequence—'tis no matter—no manner of consequence," said Miss Pemberton, endeavouring to fan herself into a better humour.—"Oh Lard, no! my daughter is to the full as well pleased

to chat with you," said Mrs. Pemberton. "Maria is not devoted to dancing, I assure you, Mr. Dawson." The side look which the young lady cast on her mother, was of a less questionable kind than the smile which she gave her partner.

Meanwhile the two dances were ended, and Adriana was looking for Mrs. Selwyn, whom she at length perceived in another part of the room, talking to Mr. Falkland. "Take a seat between us, my dear Miss Adrian," said her friend, "for I think you must be fatigued."—"No, I am not in the least," said she.—"Hearing that declaration, emboldens me to ask the favour of your hand for the ensuing dances," said Falkland.—"And after having made it, I be-

lieve I ought not to refuse," replied Adriana; "but if you will excuse me, I would rather not dance again till after supper."—"Shall I say the first two after supper, then?" asked Mr. Falkland. "I will dance with you then with pleasure," said Adriana. "But, dear Madam," turning to Mrs. Selwyn, "you talk of my being fatigued—your's is the most fatiguing business, to be a spectatress of an amusement without being a sharer in it, and to have all the toil without any of the pleasure."—"No toil, believe me," said Mrs. Selwyn; "for Cecilia, in the midst of the dance, and enjoying it as much as any of her company, has her heart so fully engaged in the scenes before her, that her eyes are constantly on the watch, to see that her guests are attended to, and she leaves me no-

thing to do.—To be sure I was just now called into the card-room, to settle a difference at a whist-table between two antiquated spinsters of the town of Arlingham. I adjusted it with a most serious face, knowing that if I called Miss Oakley to hear the appeal, she would understand it as well as myself. My judgment or decision was not questioned of course, and I shall not a little surprise Mr. Selwyn, when I get home, by telling him of my recently acquired knowedge of the 'board of green cloth."

"To see Miss Oakley this night," said Falkland, following the lively heiress round the room with his eyes, "must give all her friends pleasure; she enjoys an amusement of this kind with such a keen, such a speaking avidity, that she

communicates no small portion of her own feelings to her company. Happy, happy being!" said he, "mayest thou long enjoy thy pleasures with the same zest that thou dost at present!—But, alas!——" He stopped on perceiving that his apostrophe was attended to by Adriana. She sighed involuntarily. "Miss Oakley is very engaging," said Adriana,—"don't you think so, Sir?"—"I *do* think her so, indeed," said Falkland, "and I shall be greatly interested for her future fate. She has beauty—she has youth—she has understanding—she has many amiable qualities; yet there is an alloy to them all: she has too much money!"—"Even gold has its alloy, you know," said Adriana, smiling.

"How difficult a study is the human mind!" continued Falkland; "to know others is hard, to know one's self is yet harder. Will Miss Oakley, intoxicated with the applause and the incense she this evening receives—praised as the arbitress of taste—listened to as the goddess of wit—complimented as the queen of beauty, will she find time or inclination to fathom the motives of this unqualified adulation? Is she not more likely to be infatuated by the delusive blandishments of pleasure, to be lulled to repose by its flattery, and to fancy herself all and every thing that she is told she is?"—"She does not appear vain," said Adriana.—"She may not appear so—but you must excuse the question from me, though you may think it severe. Are any of the sex

without vanity? Perhaps I might go still further, and say, Is any human being free from it? Look around this crouded room, and tell me, Miss Adrian, does not every individual wear the face of self-satisfaction—from Mrs. Hambleton with her apron and stay-hooks, and Mr. Dawson with his head *tatooed* like an Indian's body, up to the elegant Lord Maybury and our captivating hostess?"—"Satisfaction may be apparent, but that does not bespeak its consisting in self," said Adriana: "a person may be pleased, and derive satisfaction from a scene like this, surely, without imagining that their individual charms, either of mind or person, were of the least consequence in the business. Now Mr. Dawson for instance—wherein can his self-importance

consist? He cannot be vain of *personal charms*, or of *mental abilities*, I should guess; and the trio above us," looking sportively up to the Graces depicted on the ceiling, "are much beyond him—they had no hand in forming his manners, I should think."—"He is heir to five thousand a year," said Mr. Falkland, "and about five thousand reasons for self-importance and self-approbation are to be derived from this source!"

"Well here, then, you have silenced me. But Mrs. Hambleton,——"—"Is bustling about in all the pride of active management, and every moment praising herself for the skill and method with which she has conducted her department."—"If this is the case, and vanity is so easily satisfied, I believe I must

yield you the point," said Adriana.—"And now tell me, then," said Falkland, "whether you do not think the situation of Miss Oakley extremely pitiable?—She knows not her friends from her foes; she is easy of access, has great good-nature, and little discrimination—and admits Mrs. Pemberton, the acquaintance of a few weeks, a perfect stranger in this neighbourhood, to as close a familiarity as she does Mrs. Selwyn, the wife of her guardian, a woman of sterling worth and long-tried virtue! Lord Maybury has been introduced by Mrs. Pemberton—he too is almost a stranger!"

At this moment supper was announced, and at the request of Miss Oakley, Mr. Falkland led Adriana to the room where it awaited them.

CHAP. XIII.

THE supper, (consisting of every elegant rarity and delicacy which could be procured) was served up in the dining-room. The table was arched from the top to the bottom with the most beautiful evergreens and flowers; orange trees were placed round the room, costly heaths and exotics filled up the spaces between: a temple of Pleasure, formed of

sweetmeats and frost-work, was placed in the centre of the table; and from the ceiling above it, the goddess of Fame appeared descending, blowing her silver trumpet, and ready to hang her votive wreath on the building.

To prevent confusion, after the elder parts of the assembly had seated themselves, every belle was ordered to sit by the gentleman with whom she had danced the two last dances. As neither Adriana nor Mr. Falkland had danced the two last, and as Lord Maybury had danced with Miss Oakley immediately before supper, he sat by her side at the head of the table, while many persons took the cue from Mrs. Pemberton, and exclaimed—"What a sweet couple! what a charming pair!"

Adriana was placed by Falkland, and as she chatted to him, and ingenuously gave him her sentiments and opinions on different subjects, she more than once, notwithstanding his pointed gallantry towards Miss Oakley, caught the eyes of his lordship regarding her with no small marks of curiosity; for he saw the girl from whom he could gain nothing but "yes" or "no," conversing with seeming pleasure, and great *gaité de cœur*, with old Falkland. There was an easy method of construing this:—his rank and his personal attractions had co-operated to produce a *mauvaise honte*, which the poor girl was so entirely divested of with her present entertainer.

When the supper was concluded, and the company had returned to the ball-

room, Adriana again danced with Mr. Falkland. They had reached the bottom of the set, and were resting on a sofa, when Adriana heard an old lady, after having attentively eyed her for several minutes, turn to her companion, and say, "Who is that girl in mourning who has just been dancing with Mr. Falkland?" "Her name is Adrian, or Andrews, or some such thing," answered the lady to whom the enquiry had been addressed. "O! then I am mistaken in my conjectures: but the seeing her in black, and hearing she was brought by Mrs. Selwyn, I began to put things together, and fancied she might be Hartley's daughter; and to see how far imagination will carry one, I even thought I saw a likeness of her unhappy mother." Adriana drew in her breath, to hear every word that was

said, though she felt her heart beat as if it would escape its prison; and looking up to see if Mr. Falkland observed her, to her inexpressible relief, she perceived that he had gone to another part of the room, and was conversing with a gentleman.—"Pray where is that unhappy creature?" asked one of the ladies.—"I believe, Ma'am, no one has heard of her since her elopement: some people doubt whether she went to France at all, or whether she only made it appear that she did, just to give her husband a wrong scent: certain it is, that Hartley went there himself, and he is not likely to come away again at present." Adriana's knees smote each other, but she retained her seat, in fearful expectation of what she was next to hear.

"That unhappy being, his wife, will one day come to her senses, and to reflection, perhaps," said the first speaker. "I should think, on the contrary, reflection would drive away her senses for ever! Pray, Ma'am, who is the Mr. Harcourt that she went off with?"—A deep sigh issued from the bosom of our heroine; she rose from the sofa, but was obliged to sit down again; she supported her head with her hand on the arm of the seat: a faint sickness came over her, but she did not lose her self-possession, and still had power to hear further of this distressing dialogue.

"O! some libertine, who, I understand, was on intimate terms with her husband at the very time that he seduced the affections of his wife."—"As to affection,

I believe there did not subsist much o. that! Mrs. Hartley had no heart—she was always eat up with vanity!"—"She was a very pretty woman—you remember her, Ma'am?"—"O! perfectly, when as Caroline Cosby, and when she had far different views than those of being Mrs. Hartley."—"It was her mother that spoilt her!"—"She was to be sure very indulgent, but Mrs. Cosby was in the main a good, though a weak woman."

"And her daughter," interrupted the other lady, "inherited all her mother's weakness, and none of her goodness!—And so Hartley's girl is at the manor?" "Yes, I am told so; I heard she arrived there on the very night of Mrs. Cosby's death."—"Poor thing! I pity her."—

"And so do I; and really one would notice her, but you know, Ma'am, it is impossible to introduce the daughter of a mother, under such circumstances, into any company; and when that likeness of this Miss Andrews, or Adrian, struck me just now, I was thinking that, should it be Miss Hartley, none of us mothers should be mightily obliged to the pious Mrs. Selwyn for bringing her amongst us."—"And yet it would be hard that the innocent should suffer for the guilty." "Why, that I hardly know; these things run in families in general, I think. I hear this poor child is pretty—vain no doubt, and old enough to have imbibed all her mother's wretched principles."

"I did not think that she had lived much with her parents; indeed, I took it into

my head, that Mrs. Hartley could never have suffered a grown daughter at her side."—" To my certain knowledge, Ma'am, this girl was in Grosvenor-square at the time and before the elopement, and who knows but she might be an aider and abettor in it?"—" One can hardly think that: however depraved we may suppose Mrs. Hartley, yet surely no mother could make her child the pander to her vicious inclinations!"

These prudent parents now, linked in each other's arm, walked away. Adriana was unconscious of their removal; she scarcely heard the concluding sentence, and when Mr. Falkland approached, and said she was wanted in her place, she sat like one petrified, without speech or motion. Attributing her silence to assent,

Mr. Falkland took her hand, to lead her to the dance;--it dropped down again heavily on her lap: he then for the first time looked in her face, and perceiving it pale, and despoiled of the roseate tint which had recently bloomed on it, he said, with some earnestness, "I fear you are not well, Miss Adrian? are you fatigued? are you ill?" cried he, perceiving she did not answer.—Adriana shook her head,—"Very ill indeed," sighed she.—"What shall I do?" said Falkland.

Adriana put her hands to her temples, as if to stop their beating, and to recall her recollection.—"Stop one moment!" said she. Falkland sat down by her.—After a minute's silence—"Now, now," said Adriana, "I think I can walk out of the room." She rose, but staggered

as she stood.—"One moment longer," said she, with a sickly smile. She sat down again. Falkland did not attempt to break the silence. Again Adriana rose. "You must take my arm," said he, "I must assist you through the croud."

Mrs. Selwyn approached them near the door of the room: for the first time Adriana saw Mrs. Selwyn coming towards her with a feeling of repugnance, for it was Mrs. Selwyn who had brought her to the ball.

"You are not well, my dear girl!" said her warm-hearted friend, taking her by the hand. "Good Heavens! how pale you are!—how you tremble! Mr. Falkland, you have made her dance too

much."—"No, no," said Adriana, "say nothing about it—do not—oh, do not tell the company!—do not——" Then seeing the two ladies who had given her all this uneasiness coming near them, she hastily relinquished the supporting arm of Falkland, and rushing by Mrs. Selwyn, ran down the staircase into the hall.

Frightened at her manner, and unable to account for it, both Mrs. Selwyn and Falkland followed her. The sickly lustre of the Egyptian lamp discovered her sitting on a chair, and her loud sobs smote their ears. "My dear, dear child! what is the matter?" asked Mrs. Selwyn.—"I shall be better presently," said Adriana: "will you suffer me to to go home, Madam?"—"This minute

if you are well enough," answered Mrs. Selwyn; "but had you not better remain here to-night?—Miss Oakley has prepared beds, I know, for any of her guests who may chuse to stay, and——" "Not for worlds would I remain here!" said Adriana.—"Shall I order your carriage to be drawn up?" asked Falkland. Mrs. Selwyn bowed assent, and without returning again to the company, the two ladies got into the chaise and drove off.

CHAP. XIV.

"You must sleep at the rectory to-night, Adriana."—"No! no!" cried she, bursting into tears; "no, dearest Mrs. Selwyn!—I must return to the manor." "What is the matter with you, dear Miss Hartley?—This is agitation of mind, it does not proceed from disorder of body. Will you not tell me what it is which so much distresses you?" Adriana fell on the neck of Mrs. Sel-

wyn, and as soon as sobs and tears would suffer her, she related the intelligence she had that night heard. "Oh! Mrs. Selwyn," cried she, "all the sorrows I have known—all the hours of anxiety that I have hitherto passed, were nothing compared to the acute agony which now pierces my heart.—My mother is lost—she is lost to fame and to virtue! Her conduct destroyed my grandmother!—Oh! shall I ever know peace again?—Oh! Mrs. Selwyn, I have flattered myself, with the happy days which we should pass together at the manor, when she should return, cured of her foolish attachment to the pleasures of the world, by the hardships she should have known in France. Though I have been solitary, my life has not been destitute of inte-

rest.—I have said, this lesson will I practice, because *my mother* shall hear it—this book will I read, because it gives me the geographical history of France, and on this I can converse with *my mother*—this drawing shall be finished with care, because it will be seen by my *mother*——Mother! Oh! sacred name! to be prouounced with filial reverence and affection! and must it now for ever call up the blush into my cheek? Is it henceforth to be my reproach and my disgrace? Oh! dear Mrs. Selwyn, teach me to bear as I ought this dreadful stroke!"

"Dreadful, indeed, my love," said Mrs. Selwyn, "and knowing how acutely you must feel it, both Mr. Selwyn and myself withheld it from you.

—It was for this reason, and to prevent you, (as we vainly thought) from hearing any ill-natured reflections and remarks on your appearance, that I wished you to go to-night as Miss Adrian; but could I have foreseen how my plan would have been defeated, nothing should have tempted me to recommend it."—"And had I *then* known what I know now, nothing *could* have tempted me to appear in a public room."—"Why, my dear Adriana?"—"Why! Oh! Madam! how indelicate—how——Oh! I hope no one discovered me!—do you think they did? do you think they will?"

"No, my dear. I was questioned by several about you: Mr. Falkland I thought might have suspected you, as

before I reached Oakley, it never occurred to me, that many persons would be at the ball who must have known your mother, though I did not, and that the likeness might be very striking between you: I say this never occurred to me, till Mr. Falkland asked me some questions about you, and mentioned a likeness to some one he had formerly known."—"And you did not tell him?" said Adriana with eagerness. "No, my love!"—"I am glad you did not, because if I were known to have been at the ball, the good-natured world would, no doubt, have been sure that I had *imbibed all my mother's* wicked *principles*—and, indeed, if I had been discovered, my conduct must have worn the appearance of the most unfeeling indelicacy.—Nobody, my dear

Madam, but yourself and Mr. Selwyn, would have believed that I was in the house at the time of—at the time—and that I was a stranger to the whole business."

"Every word you say stabs me to the quick, Adriana," said Mrs. Selwyn, "for I blame myself for being the ostensible cause of your distress this night. It affords a striking lesson—it shews that an artifice, however innocent may be the motive for its adoption, should never be used. But be comforted, dearest Adriana," kissing her wet cheek, "and support yourself as nobly now, as you have through those scenes to which you have recently been called!"—"Alas! Madam," replied Adriana, pensively, "where are my former

motives? How can I teach my heart to *unlearn* all it has been learning?—I must despise her whom I have been taught to honour—I must contemn her whom I have hitherto respected—I must forget that I am a daughter—I must forget the *mother* who gave me being!"

"A Christian is never *without* motives," said Mrs. Selwyn: "they exist in the midst of all human suffering—they brave death itself—they are everlasting like their divine original."—"But does the world usually judge so harshly?" asked Adriana, after a pause, "and are the innocent and the guilty always confounded?—O better, far better, is it to live in retirement for ever!—better, far better, to live solitary and

alone all the residue of, perhaps, a long life, than to be subject to the invidious sarcasms of an undistinguishing multitude!"

Mrs. Selwyn sought, but in vain, to sooth the deeply wounded mind of her youthful friend. Sanguine and enthusiastic, Adriana's spirits had been raised beyond their usual tone: the shock which had succeeded, had consequently been felt with added bitterness. She resisted all Mrs. Selwyn's entreaties of passing the night at the rectory.

"No, dear Madam," said she, "solitude and reflection are requisite to compose the hurry of my thoughts: the next time I see you, I hope you shall find me more rational."—"Then say

that you are not angry with me, my love?"—"Angry! Oh! how can you talk so my best, my only friend—my *mother?*" whispered she, as she received the offered embrace of Mrs. Selwyn.

Both Martha and Ezekiel were waiting their young lady's return. She silently walked through the hall; and thanking Ezekiel for a candle, which she took from his hand, she went immediately to her chamber, where Martha followed her with negus and biscuits. A good wood-fire blazed in the hearth, "but nothing could a charm impart" to our poor heroine. She hastily threw off her cloaths, took a little of the negus, and dismissed Martha

as soon as she could do so with any civility.

Left to herself, to the full indulgence of her reflections, she gave way to all the agony of sorrow for several hours. That ball which she had anticipated with youthful eagerness, and which had opened so pleasantly, had closed with mortification and bitter pain. She revolved every circumstance which she could recollect, that had passed in Grosvenor-square preceding her mother's flight; she reviewed the dialogue that had taken place between her father and mother relative to herself; she remembered that her father had then mentioned the name of Harcourt.

She suddered as she recalled in ima-

gination the fervid embrace of her mother—her forehead yet glowed with the pressure of her lips. "Fool that I am!" had been her last words. "Even at that moment, compunction smote at her breast!" sighed Adriana. "Nature pleaded for her child at that moment, but she fled from its voice!"

Could Adriana ever forget the clenched hands of her father—the sepulchral tones of horror with which he had uttered those words on which she had so often pondered, the meaning of which she had vainly endeavoured to divine?

"*Ask* no questions as to the *cause* of this sudden journey, the knowledge of it could be of no avail—*sufficient* is it for you to hear, that the *event* which

has *accelerated* it, has perhaps coloured your future days—that it has *disgraced* the *name* of *Hartley!*"—"At length then I have discovered the dreadful import of these words," said Adriana.—"Yes! my days are coloured! they are shaded in darkness for ever!"

"Visions of distracted night" disturbed Adriana during a transient forgetfulness, and she arose the next morning with "pallid looks and haggard eye." Before she quitted her apartment, she applied to *Him* for support, to whom no one can apply in vain. Her frame trembled as she walked down stairs, but she struggled with her feelings.

"Alack-a-day! merry nights make sad mornings, Miss!" said Martha, as she

brought in the tea-canister. "I believe this ball at Miss Oakley's spoilt your night's rest." Ezekiel at that moment put down the tea-urn, and looking into Adriana's face, he said, "She that liveth in pleasure is *dead* whilst she liveth!" then rising up on his feet, and showing nothing but the whites of his eyes, he quitted the room.

A tear rushed to the eye of Adriana —she thought of her unfortunate mother. She raised her eyes to the mantle-piece, and *there* fixed them on a portrait of a child, who, resting on a crimson cushion, was playing with a dog. "Such *was* my mother," sighed she. "Playful innocent! alas! what——" She would not trust herself even men-

tally to finish the apostrophe, but turned towards Martha.

"Why, Miss, you havn't made the tea yet--the water will be cold—I believe you left your heart at that there ball?" "No, no, I brought it home, good Martha, and here it is—heavy enough!" "And why heavy, dear Miss Cosby—Miss Hartley, I should say?" Adriana was sorry that she had gone so far, and answered, attempting to smile, "I don't know *why*, Martha,—when the heart is *sad*, it must be heavy; you know, and you have just told me, that merry nights make sad mornings."—"And you prove the truth of the saying, I warrant. But come, may I be so bold, will you tell me who you danced with?"—"With Lord Maybury," said Adriana.—"With

a lord?, what dance with a great *real* lord?—Well, that was well done!—With nobody else, I suppose?—No, you couldn't dance with any other body after the lord!"—"Yes, I did," said Adriana," smiling at the artless rusticity of Martha's manner, "I danced with a gentleman named Falkland,' "Falkland! what Squire Falkland of the Hill!"—"I do not know of what place," said Adriana.—"O that was *he*, I dare say, Miss—wasn't he a tall good-looking gentleman, of a fine presence, Miss Cosby—Miss Hartley I should say?—Miss Cosby, to be sure, has danced with him hundreds of times. Wasn't he—?" and she stood upon a chair, and took out a small black profile from the drawer of an India cabinet; wiping off the dust with her apron, "wasn't he

like this? wasn't the line of his features like this?—He wears his hair tyed now, Miss—when this was taken, it waved all down his shoulders in beautiful ringlets."

"I think there is a resemblance of the features," said Adriana. "Oh, yes, Miss, they are the very lines of his face!—My good mistress, your grand-mamma, took it as he sat by this window, come next month two and twenty years ago; he was then just eighteen, and fair to look upon. Here is another, taken that very day too, of your mamma, Miss: Miss Cosby was then just turned of thirteen—that picture, there," pointing to the mantle-piece, "was taken when she was only four years of age—I remember that too, as if it were but yesterday. What

a hard matter we had to keep her still while the painter did it!—and at the last we were forced to quiet the little thing by holding up some peacock's feathers before her eyes. Mr. Lambert the painter was a right funny man. 'Yes, yes,' says he, 'we have found something that will hit her fancy now—the young lady has a taste for finery already.' My poor dear mistress laughed to hear Mr. Lambert."

Adriana had taken the profile of her mother from the hand of Martha, and held it mechanically, though she was resting her head on her elbow and only appeared to notice it.

"Was Mr. Falkland in good spirits, Miss?" asked Martha. "I have not

seen him for *ma-ny* years now."—"Yes, he appeared very cheerful."—Ah! true, I suppose so by his dancing. Ah! he used to dance very *genteel*—I have seen him foot it in the oak parlour with so much ease, and with such an air!—But alack-a-day! for *ma-ny* long years, I believe, Mr. Falkland has had no heart for dancing—poor dear soul, he was sadly crossed!"—"Did Mr. Falkland often come to see my grandmamma?" asked Adriana.—"The last time he came withinside of these doors, Miss, was eighteen years ago come the twelfth of next November.—I remember the day well," said Martha, folding up the corner of her apron, and heaving a deep sigh. "I stood by the entry as he passed out. 'Good by, Martha!' said he. "God bless your ho-

nour!" said I; "and 'twas well I could say that, for something came up to my throat, and almost choaked me, when I heard him ride away from the stables where he mounted his horse."—"And why did he not come again?" asked Adriana, with some earnestness.—"Ah, Miss! there was a why, and there was a wherefore!" said Martha, with a countenance which expressed more than it uttered.

"Tell me all about it?" said Adriana. "Come, good Martha, bring your knitting, and give me the history of Mr. Falkland's leaving the manor, for I think—for I guess——you will oblige me by telling me," said she, fearing to put her conjectures into words.

Martha complied with this request;

but as we can better give the substance of her discourse in our own words, we will turn to another chapter for anecdotes of the Cosbys.

CHAP. XV.

MR. Cosby was born of a respectable family. Having little or no fortune, he entered the army, and being, with his regiment, quartered at the town of Arlingham, his person and plausible address, soon gained him an interest in the heart of Miss Hartley, of Hartley Manor, the only child, and reputed heiress of her father, with whom she lived. The young

red coat's attentions were not so well received by the father as by the young lady; but Mr. Cosby was not easily repulsed, and an elopement took place in the third month of his acquaintance with Miss Hartley.

Mr. Hartley was dreadfully enraged at his daughter's disobedience. Time unveiled to the mistaken wife the error of her choice, and she saw that her husband was unprincipled and extravagant. Mr. Hartley never would consent to receive him as his son; and on his death-bed he left away all his fortune to a distant relative, a male infant bearing his name, leaving his daughter a life-interest in the manor, provided she made it her residence.

At her demise, this estate was also to devolve to the infant Hartley: no settlement or provision was made for any children which might arise from the union of Mr. and Mrs. Cosby, and it was evident that the old gentleman's intention had been merely to keep his daughter from starvation, and if possible to prevent Cosby, or his children, from being benefitted in the remotest manner by him.

Disappointed in his mercenary views, Cosby gave himself up to the most intemperate debaucheries, and did not long survive his irascible father-in-law, leaving his widow with one child, a female.

In obedience to her father's will, Mrs. Cosby was obliged to keep up his usual style of living, and an accustomed num-

ber of domestics; indeed, it was evident that the old gentleman's idea had merely been that of suffering his daughter to exist at the manor, as a sort of family appendage, which he could not absolutely suffer to perish.

Deeply lamenting her former imprudence, broken in spirit, and injured in health, Mrs. Cosby's hopes were wrapped up in her infant Caroline; but her heart smote her for her unthinking and precipitate conduct, when, as she watched the cherub smiles of her darling, she recollected the forlorn state in which her death would leave her; for so restricted and so tied up had been her father's will, such arrangements had been made, and such care had been taken to prevent Mrs. Cosby from enriching herself, and by

that means making her husband or her child independent, that she was entirely subject to the agent in whose hands it had been left; and his superintendence was that of a man, who, studying his profession with tenacious and technical accuracy, strictly fulfilled every letter of the law.

Obliged to live in a sort of style which was utterly averse to her present feelings, or comfort, Mrs. Cosby every day sat down to a plentifully supplied table with an aching heart, dreading lest, perhaps, the common necessaries of life might hereafter be denied to her child; and as these fears gained ground in her mind, her affection for her Caroline daily increased: her foolish indulgence kept pace with it, and instead of steeling the young mind of

her child against the trials and the reverses to which she would probably be called, the most injudicious tenderness was manifested in her rearing, and the "winds of Heaven" were scarcely suffered "to visit her face too roughly."

We have shewn that Mrs. Cosby's principles had yielded to her inclinations in that action which marked her subsequent life, and though she had dearly purchased her experience, yet she could not purchase judgment or sound understanding.

At ten years of age, Caroline Cosby was the beautiful idol of her mother; she looked the picture of good humour, every wish was anticipated, every look was watched, and, in such a situation, her temper must have been diabolical if

smiles had not played on her countenance. Her accomplishments were not neglected; the more sterling acquirements were forgotten: how, indeed, should they have been remembered, when Mrs. Cosby knew not that such things existed?

Caroline had a good capacity and a retentive memory, and she learned all that was taught her. Early impressions and associations are never effaced. She had a decided knowledge of her pre-eminence in beauty, but as she grew older, she concealed this knowledge under the pleasing exterior of smiling simplicity.

To marry her daughter previous to her own death, was the sanguine wish of Mrs. Cosby, and many an air-drawn

scheme played on her fancy, as she sat watching the opening charms of her Caroline. Caroline thought fine cloaths, and fine coaches, and fine lords, and fine ladies, must be very fine things, because she had always heard them called so: but at fifteen she lost sight of all these thoughts for a time, when William Falkland returned, his education completed, to his father's house upon the Hill, about five miles distant from the manor.

Mr. Falkland had always visited Mr. Hartley, and had maintained a friendly intimacy with his daughter; he was a man of moderate fortune, who contentedly lived on a few hundreds, and, independent himself, sought not to enrich or to aggrandize his only son, but hoped

that he would also sit down contentedly at the Hill, and follow those maxims and customs which his father had laid down for him.

The young man had received a liberal education, his principles were good, and his heart had right propensities; but his affections were warm, and his temper empassioned and romantic; and at twenty years of age, the period of his return, these were in full flow.

He had always admired Caroline Cosby as a beautiful child, and had played, and romped, and danced with her at all the juvenile parties in the neighbourhood, where he had met her at his vacations from school and college; but now, with all her "blushing charms" just peeping

towards womanhood, he bowed to her, and almost worshipped her as a divinity.

The impression which she then made on his heart was never erased. That moment "love and desire sprang in his bosom, to himself unknown!" The evident admiration of such a young man as Falkland could not fail to interest Caroline Cosby; for, added to his personal attractions, which were at that period by no means despicable, he had a lively imagination, a happy turn of thought, and a playful manner of expressing the most trifling things, which was peculiarly pleasant to a young girl of Caroline's turn.

The heart of William Falkland she knew not how to appreciate, but she soon found out that she was the sole posses-

sor of it, and she kept up the advantage she had gained by smiles and by allurements, which were calculated to fix him her's more firmly. If sometimes he saw an air of coquetry infused in her smiles, if sometimes he had perceived the ascendency of vanity, or had discovered the false light in which she viewed a self-evident duty, the candour with which she owned the one, the air of modest humility with which she acknowledged the other, the look of partial appeal with which she heard him point out her error in the last, these taught him to love even her imperfections.

Mr. Falkland enquired not into the reason for his son's frequent visits to the manor; he had a full confidence in him, and had determined never to thwart his

inclinations on so important a point as that of marriage.

To see Caroline married was, as we have before said, the first wish of Mrs. Cosby; she liked Mr. Falkland, indeed no one could help it: she sighed as she said to herself, "If Caroline can forego all the gaieties and splendours of that world for which she is formed, why let it be so!"

Thus passed nearly two years at the manor. Caroline Cosby was increasing in beauty, the passion of Falkland increased with it; he had poured out his wishes and his hopes to his beloved, she had heard him "nothing loth," and he had gone to pay a visit of a few weeks to a friend in a distant county, in all the

conscious security of requited affection.

Soon after his departure, Mrs. Cosby received a letter from her late father's agent, informing her that Mr. Hartley, the heir to the property, having attained the age of twenty-one, it was necessary for him to visit the manor, in order to make some arrangements, and that for that purpose he should accompany him there the week ensuing.

Mrs. Cosby could not read this information without emotion. She had never seen the young man in whose favour her father had performed so cruel and unjust an act; she had thought that she could never bear him in her sight: but there now appeared a necessity for it, and,

though very reluctantly, she consented to receive the gentleman.

The prospects of Caroline Cosby at this time appeared bright, and in the absence of Falkland she judged, "*pour passer le tems,*" that it would be an agreeable break in the monotony of their life, to be interrupted by a couple of new faces.

She did not neglect to decorate herself with more than usual care on the evening when they were expected; and Mr. Hartley thought he beheld the most beautiful being in creation when he first cast his eyes on his cousin, who sustained her mother's reclining form, as, trembling with emotion, she rose to re-

ceive him who had despoiled her daughter of her inheritance.

Mr. Hartley had a most attractive person and address. Schooled in the graces of the world, his manners had acquired that high polish, which the society of well-bred people alone can bestow. Insidious and persuasive, his conversation was at once fascinating and entertaining. He almost immediately attached himself to his "charming cousin," as he delighted to call Miss Cosby; and he would have no conductress but herself, to show him round the walks, the fields, the woods, and the cliffs of Hartley manor. There, amidst rural scenery, and the wild beauties of nature, he painted the pleasures of the *beau monde* with a masterly hand. He talked of

the incense which was there offered to beauty. He flattered, he persuaded, and, skilled in rhetoric, he soon succeeded in winning her ear, and seducing her imagination, if not her heart, and at the end of ten days poor Falkland was forgotten.

Mr. Sykes, the agent, who had really the interest of the family at heart, had hoped for this consequence from their visit; he thought, with every person who saw only the exterior of things, that the union of the two cousins would be an easy way of uniting their interests, and obliterating all the injustice of the late Mr. Hartley towards his grandchild.

Mr. Sykes did not see, he did not know,

and had he seen and known, he would not have understood, that the admiration of Mr. Hartley for his cousin was merely personal, and probably would soon be effaced, when he had her in his power; that Caroline Cosby was dazzled by his showy and specious exterior, by the elegance of his carriage and the grace of his deportment, and that in listening to him, she was turning apostate to the youth who had first breathed the accents of love in her ears—the youth who lived only for her. We say, Mr. Sykes, who judged from externals only, and who was blinded by transient good from discerning lasting evil, was ignorant, and must have remained in ignorance, of these reasons against the cause which he had taken in hand.

In the advancement and *consequent happiness* of her daughter, Mrs. Cosby overlooked the disappointment of Falkland, her consent was yielded with delight, and the triumphant Hartley left the manor, only to return again within a fortnight to claim his bride. During his absence, Falkland re-appeared!

As we have seen, the elder Mr. Falkland had never interfered in his son's attachment to Miss Cosby; he had suspected it, and winked at it, but had never enquired into, nor guessed at, the extent of its progress. The report of Mr. Hartley's success with the young lady was speedily noised abroad, and thinking that his son might like to be informed of a circumstance which seemed to have all the authority which pub-

licity could give it, he mentioned it as if accidentally, in a letter which he addressed to him.

Not the smallest credit would William Falkland attach to the information; yet not another day, not another hour, would he stay with his friend; he travelled night and day, and with dishevelled hair, and haggard eyes, he presented himself at the manor.

He walked unannounced into the common sitting parlour. Mrs. and Miss Cosby were sitting at a table; the latter was eagerly viewing some beautiful diamonds which Mr. Hartley had jus sent down, her eyes sparkling with pleasure, and almost eclipsing the brilliants which she held in her hand.

"See here, Mamma! what a sweet ornament! what lovely jewels!—How good of Hartley to send them down so soon!"—"And *see here*," said Falkland, snatching her hand, (his entrance had not been perceived) "*see here*, Caroline, the wretch that you have made!" She started, and shrieked. Mrs. Cosby rose from the table.

"Tell me, Caroline—tell me," cried Falkland, wildly, "is what I hear true? and have you deceived and deserted me? Have you broken your plighted faith?—your promise?"—"My daughter never made you a promise, Mr. Falkland," said Mrs. Cosby. "Did not she own she loved me?—did she not say that she would be mine? and has she not listened with downcast eyes and smiles of

seeming pleasure while I have painted those halcyon scenes of bliss, which I now find existed only in my feverish imagination?"—"Oh, Falkland! hear me for a moment."—"Put aside those splendid baits, those paltry lures," said he, hurling the diamonds from him. Caroline rescued them from his rough hand, uttering a gentle "Oh!" as if fearing they would be injured.

"Yes! *they* have feelings," said he; "*they* are not stones—'tis I—'tis *my* heart which is a petrifaction. You have tried it, Caroline—you have tried it!"

Caroline hid her face with her handkerchief. "My daughter has a right to follow her own inclinations, Mr. Falkland. This match with her cousin

will be a prudent and a most unexceptionable one, as it will be the means of ending every thing in the most amicable way. I therefore must entreat you, Mr. Falkland, by the regard which you formerly professed for Caroline, that you will not disturb her happiness!"

"I disturb it!—*I* disturb the happiness of Caroline Cosby! Gracious God!" He put his hands before his eyes, sank into a chair, and burst into tears. Then, after a few minutes, rising and walking again towards Caroline, "That you have *seen* me weep—that you have heard unmanly sobs issue from my bosom—this you may tell—this you may boast of to Mr. Hartley——but, stop," said he, "am I not too hasty.—And are you really—Is it—can it be? Oh, Caroline!

are you to become the wife of Hartley? Speak, I charge you, speak—tell me without reserve—or kill me at your feet!"—"Mr. Hartley is—I—we—"—Caroline stammered. "Farewell for ever!" said Falkland, clenching his hands in agony, "False, perjured, vain woman! farewell for ever!"

Then it was, that crossing through the hall in all the paroxysm of despair, the simple adieu of Martha had fallen on the ear of the anguish-struck Falkland.

He went not to the Hill that day. He wrote a few lines to his father accounting for his absence in the best manner he could, and he wandered for six successive days and nights over heaths and

hills, and plains and dales, "unknowing and unknown." The chill blasts of November pierced his breast, but he felt them not—the falling torrents drenched his cloaths, but he heeded them not—darkness and light were to him the same. His mental sufferings rendered him impervious to all the inclemencies of weather or of season.

At length he was seized with an illness which rapidly increased into a violent fever. At a little hedge alehouse in the public road, he lay bereft of sense and motion that day on which the elegant bridal chariot of Mr. and Mrs. Hartley passed it, which was transporting the hymeneal happy pair to the metropolis. The poor victim to woman's vanity saw not the glittering pa-

raphernalia; but the father, who hung over his humble bed, espied it from the little casement of the wretched chamber, and the bitter tear of agony moistened the fever-dried cheek of his only son—his age's only comfort! Then drying his eyes, as the long-drawn sigh escaped his bosom, he whispered to himself, "I am glad she is gone—I am glad she is out of the neighbourhood."

Youth, aided by a father's exertions, did much for William Falkland; he soon recovered his health; but his spirits and vivacity were not so easily restored. It was of no avail that his reason and good sense were continually reminding him, that such a woman as Caroline Cosby had proved herself, was not worth a thought, and that he ought to

rejoice in his escape. Still he remembered that, "such things were, and were most pleasant to him;" and his vivid imagination was for ever recalling the scenes of felicity, which once seemed rising on his days.

Years elapsed, and the death of his father, by calling him to sustain a more responsible part in society, insensibly drew him a little from himself. His disposition had been hurt, not soured by his disappointment. He was still generous, tender, and actively humane; but a pensive cast had clouded that bright vein of pleasantry which once marked his conversation, and he lived as much as he could to himself; and in strolling over his grounds, and in literary researches, he passed his days,

gradually sinking into a recluse, though not a misanthrope; he never more had bowed to the charms of beauty, he never more did homage to *vanity* in the form of a woman!

The residence of Mr. Selwyn in his neighbourhood, was a great acquisition to him; he became reconciled to society, such as he found at the rectory. Mrs. Selwyn he believed an exception to her sex; at least he thought her *vanity* had taken a proper turn, for he saw her *vain* only of her husband's affections, and anxious only to please him, and to do her duty as he pointed it out.

During the last six or seven years, Mr. Falkland had visited more promiscuously, and had recovered much of

his former pleasant manner of conversing. Mr. Selwyn had mentioned Adriana to him with warm praise, on his first seeing her at the manor; but the quick flush of Mr. Falkland's countenance, and the abrupt manner in which he changed the conversation, convinced the rector that this was an unpleasant subject. How much then, and how agreeably was Mrs. Selwyn surprised, when she saw Adriana accidentally singled out for his partner at Oakley, and remarked by the unusual animation of his manner, that her amiable and attractive deportment had not failed of their effect, and that the lover of the mother might hereafter prove the friend of the daughter. She had cautiously evaded all his enquiries respecting Miss *Adrian*, though the

anxious interest with which he made them, did not escape her penetration; for the magnetic influence of Miss Cosby seemed to be extended to Miss Hartley.

We have seen the motives which produced the union between Mr. and Mrs. Hartley: vanity on the one hand, passion on the other. Mrs. Hartley was intoxicated with her success, and pursued the career of pleasure with unsated avidity. Mr. Hartley paid her attention as long as it is usual for men of fashion to pay it to their wives; he then continued the *utmost politeness* towards her, and contentedly and uninterruptedly this couple sought folly in whatever form they liked.

Play was a temptation to which Hartley often yielded; his lady's losses in this way were not trivial: her husband's purse replenished her's as long as he could find means; for, proud of her beauty, and valuing himself on its possession, though he had long been satiated with it, he would not let her be under obligations to any of the herd who fawned and hovered round her. A *gambler* is sometimes careful of the *honour* of his wife! and though Mrs. Hartley coquetted and leered with all the witching arts of a trained beauty, yet no serious attack had hitherto been made on her honour by common fame.

Mr. Harcourt returned from India with a large fortune: he had been the

schoolfellow and intimate boyish friend of Hartley; a libertine in morals, a free-thinker and infidel in his opinions, with prepossessing address, and easy manners, he was admitted on terms of renewed and close amity by Mr. Hartley.

The yet unfaded charms of Mrs. Hartley, set off by all the adventitious aids of art and dress, were calculated to light up a guilty passion in the breast of a man, who had been used to her style of beauty amongst the voluptuous and languishing females of the East.

His purse supplied the wants of Mr. Hartley; by the most delicate and refined flattery, he gained the ear of his wife. Mrs. Hartley perceived that a short period only could elapse, ere she must forego all the gratifications for which she

lived, as the embarrassment of her husband's fortune was evident.

Harcourt painted the happiness of a life of liberty, for such he termed a life of the greatest slavery—the slavery of sin! Mrs. Hartley started not, as she should have done, at such a subject; she hesitated, she listened, she deliberated. We have seen that she was lost! and once again she fell a victim to that vanity which had formed the leading trait of her character, which had been early and fatally implanted in her young mind, by a weak and erring mother, who, when too late, had bewailed her errors, and whose death had been precipitated by them.

The account of Mrs. Hartley's elopement had been heard by Falkland with the deepest concern: though love had long been extinguished in his breast, yet he lamented the final ruin of her, whom he remembered, once lovely in innocence as in beauty; and with a sigh of regret, perhaps, as excusable as it was natural, he whispered "Had she been my wife, she yet had been a virtuous and respected one."

In order to give our readers a general insight into the events that had taken place previous to the commencement of our history, we have branched off on this side and on that, for their information, but we must desire them to remember that old Martha, though filling up her narrative with numerous little episodes

and family anecdotes, yet kept in view the main subject for which she had been summoned by our heroine, viz. the history of Mr. Falkland.

She wiped her eyes as she concluded—'God bless your honour!' said I.—'Farewell, Martha!' said he, as he crossed the hall. He has never stirred foot within these doors since that day, and that was eighteen years gone come the twelfth of next November. Ah! Miss, said I not, that there was a *why*, and there was a *wherefore?* O! what a rainy night was that! doors clapped, and the wind howled, and the sea roared, there were some as had no house over their heads that melancholy night." Then followed the history of Falkland's illness.

Adriana sobbed and shuddered; it was her mother who had done this, it was her mother who had driven out this amiable man to the fury of the merciless elements.

"Poor, poor Mr. Falkland!" sighed she. "Ah! Miss, and I have said the same the best part of a thousand times; but there:—there's no crying over spilt milk, as the saying is; but, perhaps, your mamma, Miss, would have been as well off in the main, if she had been constant to her first true lover."

"As well!" said Adriana, softly.—"For though," continued Martha, "your papa is a fine sightly man to look at, and has a bold air, and presence, and knows all about gentility and fashion, and London, and these things, yet Mr. Falk-

land, being a true real bred Devonshire gentleman, one of our neighbour's sons, and so like, why it might have been better; but then, marriages are made in Heaven, as folks say.

"And your grandmamma, she would have had her daughter near her, in that case, you know, Miss; for London was a great way off, and Brighton and Tunbridge, and that, in the summer. The sea was better too, mayhap, at Brighton than under our own old cliffs. I suppose it was, for I've heard tell, your mamma used to go there to watering every summer, and I used often to wonder that she didn't prefer our own salt sea, that was so natural to her."

"Did my mamma never come down here, Martha?"—"Never, Miss, but once, and that was when you were born, and once after. When you were born, I believe, she had her fears, and that; as what woman, you know, Miss, but must needs have at those times, and so she thought her mother's house was the best place to be in. And about two years after, she came down again with Mr. Hartley; became about leasing the estates and such like."

"And did—and did Mr. Falkland ever see her?" eagerly asked Adriana.—"O! no, Miss, no! I heard he went miles off, as soon as he heard they were coming into the country. No, no, poor soul, he would sooner have faced a naked sword, as the saying is—no, he has never entered

these doors since that day, eighteen long years a-gone come the twelfth of next November!" said Martha, bowing her head emphatically, as she changed the needle in the stocking she was knitting.

CHAP. XVI.

THE sun was rising in the east, when Miss Oakley sought her pillow; the night had passed on halcyon wings, for amidst the applause of her female friends, and the gallant compliments of the country beaux, she had received that attention for which her heart exclusively panted. She had been the sole object of Lord May-

bury's devotion; his manner, his language, could not be misconstrued, and she should be the happiest of women.

Thus thought the inexperienced Cecilia, as she ruminated on the scenes of the foregoing night. Lord Maybury's person and address were evidently in his favour; these alone Miss Oakley observed, and of little else could his lordship boast, except an understanding, the perversion of which had been the sole business of his life.

Early emancipated from controul by the death of his father, and coming into the possession of a good estate (though being Irish, it was of course a little encumbered), he had entered the army, and indiscriminately resigned himself to the

indulgence of all his wishes, either of passion or caprice, and while maintaining a strict deference for the laws of honour, he defied and contemned all other laws, both human and divine.

Yet he was universally received, even courted both by male and female society, by men who called themselves moral, by women who termed themselves virtuous: and can we wonder at the courtly ease, and the well-bred assurance of his manners, where he was a stranger, if, where he was known, he received all the deference and distinction which merit only should ensure.

At the period when our history commenced, he found that it was absolutely necessary to adopt some expedient for re-

cruiting his exhausted finances, having laid mortgage on mortgage, in the county of Meath, till his title to his estates was become merely nominal.

Marriage to the libertines of the last century, even baited with gold, was a bitter pill, from which they recoiled; but, our's is an improving age: a married man is more certain of success with ladies of *haut ton*; than if he had remained single; and if a poor devil has sacrificed his fine person and his liberty for money, what tender heart but must sympathize and participate with him in his distressful situation?

Lord Maybury was distantly related to Mrs. Pemberton, a lady whose conduct had been pretty notorious in the county

of Meath, during the life-time of her husband. At his death she saw herself left with a scanty income, and two overgrown girls; to settle them by marriage was her plan.

She brought them to England (a market which has been generally favourable to pretty Irish girls), but her finances did not permit her getting into the world at present; and till some capital stroke had been effected, she came to the town of Arlingham, which, from its distance from the metropolis, had enticed many families of small independent fortunes to reside there.

Many country gentlemen of property lived in the vicinity, and if she could but fix a rich squire for one daughter,

the other would go off in London, or Bath, with the help of his purse: this was her plan, but, as she herself had allowed at Oakley, her girls did not take.

When the —— regiment was ordered to Arlingham, Lord Maybury recollected to have been told that Mrs. Pemberton had gone there to live. They had been too similar in their pursuits, and were too congenial in their ideas, not to like each other's society.

With all the address and the assurance of her country, Mrs. Pemberton had wormed herself into intimate terms with many families. Miss Oakley's fortune, her inexperience, and the ease with which she admitted introductions, were not over-

looked; and really pleased with her person, and liveliness of manner, Lord Maybury determined on making her his wife, from the first moment he saw her.

"She is pleasant and gay, she does not want for sense, I see," said he, "but there is no fashion in her, nothing of *ton*! How should there, indeed! Bred in the country, educated in Bristol, a grocer for her father, an old housekeeper for her aunt, a parson for her guardian, and the parson's wife for her companion! but I can forgive all this, as it is her misfortune, and not her fault; and the world will forgive me, when they hear that she brought me the *siller*. So be you my friend, good Pemberton, and you shall receive a sum of money, the

day on which I marry the heiress, which shall give yourself and the Meath girls *a Winter in Bath.*"

Neither his lordship nor Mrs. Pemberton were deficient in skill or address, and each being separately interested in forwarding this plan, we do not wonder that Miss Oakley suffered herself to fall into it; that her youthful inexperience was captivated by the agreeable gaiety and easiness of his lordship's conversation; that her self-consequence was flattered at having made conquest of a man of his rank and figure.

The ball had ascertained what she had previously hoped and anticipated; for lord Maybury had taken an opportunity, after supper, of breathing forth his pas-

sion, in all the florid language which he so well understood; and a novice in affairs of the heart, the credulous and all-confiding Cecilia could not conceal from his penetrating eye, that she heard him with secret delight.

Miss Oakley was independent, no one had a right to thwart her inclinations, no one had a right to prevent her following the dictates of her heart; but on Mr. Selwyn's judgment she had hitherto placed the firmest reliance: to him she had heretofore appealed in every case where she did not feel herself qualified to decide; but on this material point, on this which was to decide her weal or woe through life, she dared not consult him, for she knew that his voice would be against her wishes.

He had more than once mentioned Lord Maybury in her hearing, and that not in the highest terms. He had frequently cautioned her against too great an intimacy with the Pembertons; but impelled by the hope of meeting his lordship, and gratified by the marked attention which she received from Mrs. Pemberton, Cecilia had frequently gone over to Arlingham within the last month, and had been sure of meeting Lord Maybury at his convenient relation's.

Mrs. Hambleton declared she was jaded to death, when, at mid-day, she awoke her niece out of sweet repose.—"'Tis ruination!" said she, "and squanderation too! Ah! well you may lie a-bed--'tis enough to make any one's heart ache, to be up, and see the *Troy town* which

this house is in; what tumult and what confusionyour mad frolic has caused! I staid up hours and hours after the folks were all gone, walking to and fro, and putting things to rights, and blowing out the candles, and I took care to put out the light of the Egyptian lamps in the hall."

"And consigned it to Egyptian darkness," said Cecilia, yawning.—"No, Miss Cicey, for the sun shone bright upon me as I was doing it.—Ah! sad, sad doings! thought I—this is turning night into day with a vengeance! Come, child, come, Cicey, do get up, and see all the confusion you have caused."

"Like another Helen," said Cecilia, laughing, "spectatress of the ruin I

have made; for you have just been talking of Troy, aunt—this is the first time that I knew you to be so classical!"—"I always knew you were whimsical," said Mrs. Hambleton, "but I little thought how far you meant to follow up your whimsies."

Meantime, in her *robe de chambre*, Cecilia walked to her toilette, and surveying herself from the glass, she broke out rather theatrically,

"Such Helen was, and who could blame the boy,
"That in so bright a flame consumed his Troy?"

A smile stole over her features—she was thinking of Lord Maybury.

"Nonsense, nonsense! what dy'e talk about boys for?" said Mrs. Hambleton;

"but that reminds me, not that I am grieved or that I vex at it, but your fine painted and coloured floor is all danced one into the other, that there is nothing discernible of it."

"Chaos is come again!" said Cecilia, parting her hair. "I say, Miss Cicey, I don't vex about it, not I, because I think it was a shame, that ever that naked boy should have been painted in any single woman's house, without a rag to cover him—'tis a shame, and quite indecent."

"Does not love shroud himself on beds of roses, aunt?" asked Cecelia; "yes, yes, I know he does," and a smile dimpled her mouth.—"Love! nonsense," said

Mrs. Hambleton, "I say, love, do make haste, and come down to breakfast."

"Then do send my maid to me; and, good aunt, will you *humanize* yourself the least bit in the world, for we shall have the whole host of the Philistines upon us presently, to know if we have survived our last night's dissipation."

"Let them come, or stay away, 'tis all one to me, Cicey," said Mrs. Hambleton, "I shall have enough to do in counting up the spoons, and putting away the china, and such like. I shan't see you ruined outright if I can help it, neither!"

"Ruin, and silver spoons, and china—

what a horrid concatenation!—rank, love, Maybury—what acha ming one!" said Cecilia, as the old lady walked out of the room.

CHAP. XIV.

The incident which had caused the distress of our heroine, and which in so mortifying and abrupt a manner had let her into the knowledge of her mother's misconduct, was severely regretted by Mr. and Mrs. Selwyn, who blamed themselves as being in some measure the causes of it, in persuading

her to go to the ball at Oakley, and appearing under a feigned name.

The succeeding day this worthy couple walked over to the manor, and found Adriana more composed than they had expected she would have been. Indeed, she struggled with her feelings and endeavoured to appear cheerful, lest her friends should reproach themselves at the recollection of the part which they had in occasioning her distress. Adriana requested to be excused for the present from visiting at the rectory ; and its inhabitants left her, with many kind and parental expressions of affection and friendship, which sprung from the heart, for they felt their regard for her increase at every succeeding interview.

Mr. Falkland had contented himself by a verbal message of enquiry, which he dispatched to the rectory the morning after the ball. *Appeared* to have contented himself, we should have said, for "discontent sat heavy at his heart." Neither time nor absence had obliterated the image of Caroline Cosby from his memory, although her *inconstancy* had long cured him of his passion, and principle had early taught him to banish the image of a married woman from his thoughts. But the likeness of Adriana to that "once lov'd and faithless fair," had forcibly struck him the first time that her lips severed to address him.

She had been introduced to him by Miss Oakley as Miss Adrian; neither her face nor her form were calculated

to be overlooked: he heard several persons enquire who she was, but not one seemed able to give any information concerning her.

Pleased with his youthful partner, interested by her manner, and entertained by the *näif* simplicity of her conversation, he obliquely made enquiries of herself; but she had appeared confused, and he had gained nothing but that she had come to Oakley with Mrs. Selwyn. The eager solicitude with which he had questioned that lady, hovering near the point from which issued all his curiosity, yet not daring to put it into language, did not escape her penetration, but she forbore to gratify him, wishing that he might see a little more of Miss Hartley, and that he might

overcome his prejudices towards her, before she hazarded the disclosure.

But suspicion still hovered in the breast of Falkland; he hoped, yet feared, that this might be the daughter of Caroline Cosby; he hoped it because he yet loved to behold her beautiful image in her daughter, as it had once shone in the purity of innocence; he feared it, because a daughter, who, under the recent and disgraceful circumstances which had attended her mother's elopement, could appear in public, and could enjoy a dance in the very circle and amongst the scenes where that mother had been born, must evince such unfeeling apathy, such fragrant indelicacy, as he shuddered to think of.

Under the influence of these opposing feelings, he had sent his servant to the rectory, and had himself rode over to Oakley; and there, while paying his compliment to the gay heiress, he accidentally heard that enquiry, which he had longed, yet had not courage to make, and heard the heiress, with adroit and careless ease, answer, "a friend of Mrs. Selwyn's."

Some days elapsed ere he called on Mr. Selwyn; his lady was seated at her work-table, and alone. "Your friend has then left you?" "You mean Miss Adrian: she went the morning after the ball."

Mrs. Selwyn longed to have said more, but after the almost *solemn* injunctions

of Adriana, she dared not. Mr. Falkland would have given worlds to have asked one question, but had *worlds* been offered him, he thought he could not have articulated a syllable, and he shortly took his leave.

The monotony of Adriana's life was a little enlivened by the receipt of the following letter from Miss Oakley, within a week after the ball.

THE LETTER.

"*Private Theatricals.*"

"On Tuesday night was performed at Oakley lodge, the favourite play of 'The Wonder; or, a Woman keeps a Secret.' The part of Viola sustained by

Miss Oakley, who came off with unbounded applause! Yes, it has put me to the torture, but still I have not yielded up my Cinderella's name; and as she did not lose her glass slipper, I believe *they* will be a long time in finding her out, especially as Mrs. Selwyn tells me, she is *never* going to leave the manor again. Dear Miss Hartley, I am truly sorry for the distress you suffered at my house; but why, on that account, you should immure yourself for ever, I can't divine. I am also forbid to call on you; and, to vent my grief, I must needs trouble you with an *heroic epistle*.—Heigho! I have just been thinking of the difference between us, my charming little friend;—you, all propriety and prudence—I, all volatility and thoughtlessness.—Heigho! again.—*They* will be a long time in find-

ing it out, I said above. Methinks I hear you very gravely saying, 'Who does she mean by *they* ?'—Why the men my dear, the men from Dawson to my Lord Maybury—there's a climax ! which you may fill up with an hundred names, curates as well as rectors, subalterns as well as commanding officers, dashers and quizzers, as well as reasonable beings.—Seriously, dear Miss Hartley, I am very, very angry with you. I had never so great a mind to form an intimacy as with you. I have met you, I am sure, more than half way—and, you sensitive plant, you—what shall I call you ?—you snail, you just put yourself slowly forth to be seen, and to be admired, and then recoil and retreat to your mansion.—Well, it's of no use to call names ; I believe I must learn to inure myself to disappoint-

ments—I must *learn*, I say, for as yet I have never met with a serious one in my life; and to tell you the truth, dear Adriana, I *think* I might find a *real* and *true* serious one, very difficult to bear. Suppose, for instance, that, after all he has sworn——Pshaw! why instance impossibilities?—I declare I do not know what ails me, but as I sit, throwing away one pen, and crying pish and pshaw, and taking up another at the instant, and moving about from right to left twenty times in a minute, my aunt Hambleton, who is very *nobly* employed in *hemming dusters* opposite to me, lifts up her spectacles, and resting them on the high roll which supports the little fly cap, she says, 'In the name of fortune, what ails thee, girl?'—'Meaning me, Ma'am?'—'Meaning you, Cicey.'—'Lord, Ma'am! what a

terrible hissing you keep! I assure you, dear aunt, since you have lost one or two or three of your *teeth*, the abbreviation of my name does not answer at all!'—You are never without an answer I think, *Miss!*'—'Dear aunt! would you have your *Cissy-hissy* lose her sex's charter!'—But it is you that are to *answer* for all this flippancy, Miss Adriana; for, out of humour with you for *daring* to sequester yourself, and not thinking it right and proper to vent all my spleen on the paper, I most *inhumanly* and barbarously have turned myself on my poor dear notable aunt.—Well, God bless you, Miss Hartley, and turn your heart! So will pray

"Your cruelly used,

"but still sincere friend,

"CECILIA OAKLEY."

Still remaining in utter ignorance respecting Mr. Hartley's situation, and not daring to glance a hope, scarcely a thought of enquiry, towards that of her mother, the days of Adriana passed cheerlessly on. Afraid to meet the eye of a human being, to whom the guilt of Mrs. Hartley's conduct might be known, or who might recognise in her child that girl who frolicked with careless and unfeeling levity at Miss Oakley's ball, Adriana absented herself from the rectory as frequently as she could with civility; she always made a particular enquiry if there was any company before she entered, and while she remained there, every ring of the bell at the gate threw her into a nervous trepidation. Mr. and Mrs. Selwyn pitied her sincerely, and respected the delicacy of feeling which had

given birth to these emotions. Nothing, they feared, was to be done to relieve her from them, unless the return of Mr. Hartley, and his protection, should once more give her consequence in her own eyes; or unless she could at once resolutely resolve to step into company, and to bear, unmoved, those questions, and those looks of curiosity, which, once gratified, would speedily be hushed into silence: but the return of Mr. Hartley was scarcely to be expected in the present situation of public affairs, and even to hint to Adriana the adoption of the latter alternative, was what neither of this worthy couple would venture to do.

Abstraction from society was thus forming the character of Adriana to steadiness and reflection, far beyond her

years. Alive to the best affections of human nature, yet warm-hearted, empassioned, and sanguine, the enthusiasm and romance which *would* have attended her, had she rushed into the world with all her feelings afloat, was now checked and restrained by the peculiarity of her situation. She had leisure and time for reflection; her mind had been properly stored, and her retired hours at the manor had helped to fix her judgment, and to correct the errors of her nature: she saw, with regret, how vain and fallacious had been those ardent hopes, and that gay perspective, on which her imagination had fed itself in Cumberland; she had learned that this world is a far different scene to that sunshine of pleasure and happiness which she had then pourtrayed it; and though she looked forwards with

hope, yet it was a *hope* fixed on a firmer basis than on this nether world—it was the hope of a christian! And happy was it for the youthful Adriana, that this hope was firmly implanted in her mind: bereft of it, where could she have looked for a ray of comfort? The return of her parents, which was once the ardent wish for which she seemed to live, which had given to every passing hour a feeling of anxious expectation, was now lost sight of as a cause of hope; for what could it produce to her?—Her mother had disgraced and abandoned her husband and her child! her father, feeling the weight of her misconduct—wounded to the soul by the reproach and contumely which she had affixed to his name, would he seek that comfort from his daughter, and from

domestic habits, which his wife had despoiled him of?

As these thoughts crouded into the mind of Adriana, they had often a painful influence over her whole frame. The apprehension of Mr. Hartley's sudden return would start to her fancy, and the sound of horses' feet would, at these moments, almost paralyse her. The waves on the sea-shore, or the wind rushing through the large and hollow chimnies of the manor, would often cause her to start from her pillow at midnight, expecting to hear a carriage drive into the court-way.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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